

**THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE ENGLISH  
SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN  
GRADE EIGHT**

**by**

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that

**THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE ENGLISH  
SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN GRADE  
EIGHT**

is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this research was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.



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**THOBEDI M.A.**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

God ... thank you for the opportunity that I may live and be able to continue giving knowledge unto others.

My father, mother and brothers ... thanks for your love and support that I continue to grow.

Thabong schools (Welkom) and the Department of Education (Free State) ... it is because of your interest that I also give thanks to you.

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## SUMMARY

The research study advocates the use of the communicative approach in the teaching and learning of English Second Language (ESL) in Grade eight. In 1998, the re-birth of education has been introduced through Curriculum 2005 to advance teaching and learning in South African schools. Above all, the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) approach enhances the teaching and learning of ESL with modern, effective and communicative strategies in Grade eight (Senior Phase), the General Education and Training (GET) band.

The OBE way of teaching and learning has moved away from a content-based curriculum, to a task-based curriculum. ESL teaching and learning is a process, a shift from educator-centredness to a learner-centred approach. The educator facilitates the ESL activities by means of effective strategies while learners participate proactively. The process of each task-based activity is directed towards the capability task, and is characterised by the end products to show the Critical and Specific Outcomes in creating a meaningful learning.

It is through the communicative approach that the use of learning support material in ESL activities derives a meaningful learning environment. Thus, the communicative approach, is the means through which the communicative strategies are utilised and competent learners happen to be developed.

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## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	: <i>Balancing BICS and CALP in ESL</i>	24
Figure 2	: <i>The five Dimensions of Learning</i>	29
Figure 3	: <i>Meaningless ESL communication as a product</i>	37
Figure 4	: <i>Meaningful ESL communication as a process</i>	40
Figure 5	: <i>Outcomes' column for LLC</i>	61
Figure 6	: <i>Notional Time for each Learning Area</i>	66
Figure 7	: <i>A balanced "in tandem" triangle</i>	71
Figure 8	: <i>An imbalanced "in tandem" triangle</i>	72
Figure 9	: <i>Expanding a balanced "in tandem" triangle</i>	73
Figure 10	: <i>Culminating the ESL outcomes</i>	87
Figure 11	: <i>The design-down and deliver-up model</i>	88
Figure 12	: <i>The levels of achievement and proficiency maps</i>	92
Figure 13	: <i>A rubric for written tasks</i>	95

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## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 :	<i>The Grade eight ESL population (Thabong - Lejweleputswa)</i>	16
Table 2 :	<i>Common Accelerative Learning Factors (Suggestopedia)</i>	45
Table 3 :	<i>The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)</i>	52
Table 4 :	<i>The National Qualifications Framework (NQF): GETC</i>	53
Table 5 :	<i>The Direct Instruction strategy</i>	76
Table 6 :	<i>The Indirect Instruction strategy</i>	77
Table 7 :	<i>The Independent strategies</i>	78
Table 8 :	<i>The Co-operative or group learning strategies</i>	80
Table 9 :	<i>The shift from content measurement to performance assessment</i>	90

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## ACRONYMS

ABET	:	Adult Basic Education and Training
AC	:	Arts and Culture
AE	:	Adult Education
AL	:	Adult Learner
ANC	:	African National Congress
BICS	:	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	:	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CASS	:	Continuous Assessment
CO	:	Critical Outcomes
DoE	:	Department of Education
EFL	:	English First Language
ELP	:	English Language Proficiency
ESL	:	English Second Language
GETC	:	General Education and Training Certificate
HED	:	Higher Education Diploma
HSS	:	History and Social Sciences
LAC	:	Language Across the Curriculum
LLC	:	Language, Literacy and Communication
LO	:	Life Orientation
LSEN	:	Learners with Specific Educational Needs
LSM	:	Learning Support Material
MLMMS	:	Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences



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## ACRONYMS (continued)

NFE	:	Non-Formal Education
NQF	:	National Qualifications Framework
NS	:	Natural Science
NT	:	Notional Time
OBE	:	Outcomes-Based Education
PI	:	Performance Indicator
RSA	:	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	:	South African Qualifications Authority
SO	:	Specific Outcomes
TECH	:	Technology

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACRONYMS</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION</b>	
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1.1 The communicative approach	2
1.1.2 Teaching and learning	3
1.1.3 Teaching and learning strategies	4
1.1.4 Language	4
1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION	10
1.3 AIMS OF STUDY	11
1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE STUDY	12

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1.5	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	14
1.6	DERMACATION OF STUDY	17
1.7	COURSE OF STUDY	17

## CHAPTER TWO

### TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

2.1	INTRODUCTION	18
2.2	EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA	20
2.3	ESL AND THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	22
2.4	EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF ESL	25
2.4.1	Communication in ESL	26
2.4.2	Language and cognition	28
2.4.3	Language constructivists	30
2.4.4	ESL communication as a product	35
2.4.5	ESL communication as a process	38
2.5	THE APPROACHES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING	40
2.5.1	Inductive approach	41
2.5.2	Deductive approach	42



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2.5.3 The teaching and learning methods	43
2.6 CONCLUSION	47

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **INTEGRATING THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH WITH OBE**

3.1 INTRODUCTION	49
3.1.1 SAQA	50
3.1.2 The NQF and its objectives	51
3.2 THE RATIONALE FOR TRANSITION IN EDUCATION	53
3.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN OBE APPROACH	56
3.4 AN OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM 2005	57
3.5 OUTCOMES IN LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION	59
3.5.1 Definition of an outcome	60
3.5.2 Critical outcomes	62
3.5.3 Specific outcomes	63
3.5.4 Learning programme	64
3.5.4.1 ESL learning programme	66
3.5.4.2 Range statement	67

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3.5.4.3	Assessment criteria	68
3.5.4.4	Performance indicators	68
3.5.5	Achieving outcomes through the communicative approach	69
3.6	TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES	75
3.6.1	Direct versus Indirect teaching	75
3.6.2	Independent or Co-operative strategy	77
3.6.3	Meaningful reception learning	79
3.7	LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIAL	81
3.7.1	The types of learning support material	81
3.7.2	The guiding principles in the development of LSM	83
3.8	CAPABILITY TASKS	85
3.9	ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES	88
3.9.1	Assessment methods	92
3.9.2	The principles for effective and informative assessment	93
3.9.3	Assessment tools	94
3.10	CONCLUSION	96

---

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION, REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

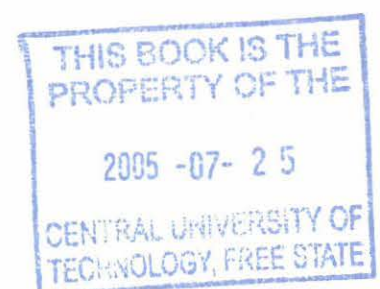
4.1	INTRODUCTION	97
4.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	98
4.2.1	Social context	99
4.2.2	Sampling methods	100
4.2.3	Research instruments	101
4.2.3.1	Structure of observations	101
4.2.3.2	Structure of interviews	102
4.3	LIMITATION	103
4.4	BASIC DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING	104
4.4.1	Observations from Grade eight ESL classes	104
4.4.2	Interview responses	109
4.4.2.1	Educators' responses during interviews	109
4.4.2.2	Learners' responses during interviews	120
4.5	CONCLUSION	129

---

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1	INTRODUCTION	131
5.2	FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY	131
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	137
5.4	CONCLUSION	139
5.5	SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	140
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>141</b>



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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The re-birth of South Africa in 1994 brought changes in education. The introduction of the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) approach enhances teaching and learning also in languages. The outcomes in languages result competency due to the use of the communicative approach (Ntlhakana 2000:11). Brady (1997:84) asserts that OBE shifts from inputs and the processes of teaching and learning to outcomes in describing achievements.

Steyn and Wilkinson (1998:201) also contend that the introduction of OBE in South Africa heralds an era of meaningful teaching. OBE strives to root out the last vestiges of apartheid education. The aim is to empower learners with communication skills by succeeding in the real life after leaving school.

However, the language deficit that hides during communication hinders the learners' success in the activities of different learning areas at school (Schlebusch 2000:1). This deficit brings the inadequate use of English, hence the second language learners display low levels of English language proficiency (Heugh, Siegruhn and Pluddemann 1995:66). In the previously disadvantaged black schools learners use English in learning other subjects (learning areas) except in the vernaculars. Teaching and learning in those



subjects pose a problem for the English Second Language (ESL) learners. The approaches that are used in the teaching and learning of ESL seem to be the main cause of the problem. Many specialists have recommended the use of the communicative approach in the teaching and learning of languages (Mac Pherson, Crowley, Knight, Mfuloane, Stonier and Yule 1992:7).

### **1.1.1 The communicative approach**

The communicative approach is defined as the intent of using language in accomplishing some function. To accomplish some functions when communicating, the learners apply knowledge and negotiate meaning during interactions so that meaning becomes clarified (Larsen-Freeman 1986:123).

According to Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:12), the communicative approach is the effective use and integration of various teaching and learning strategies by the educators. Every educator enhances teaching and learning by integrating strategies such as those that involve some instructional and co-operative learning. These strategies are used for the communicative purposes with individuals and groups. The use of the communicative approach in ESL classrooms aims to develop the learners' competencies and the ability to use English for communication in the real authentic situations, such as during formal and informal conversations. Miscommunication in teaching and learning happens between educators and learners when there is lack of interpretation and wrong utterances start to occur (Crystal 1991:20).

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### 1.1.2 Teaching and learning

In the context of this study, teaching and learning signifies one concept when used together, hence the verb ends with (s). However, each term has different connotations when used alone, again the verb ends with (s).

Jacobsen, Eggen and Kauchak (1999:232) assert that traditional teaching and learning implies the educators' way of ordering primary instructions to learners. The educator begins with an objective and presents a lecture, textbook reading, discussion or combination of these teaching methods. Formal evaluation succeeds the primary instructions in order to measure the learners' achievement. Regardless of achievement of the primary instruction, the educator repeats the cycle of objective-primary instruction-examination until the curriculum has been taught. Teaching and learning in this way, would be a problem to learners as there is no meaningful learning.

Teaching is about how to stimulate learning and what to minimize which can be of a barrier to learning (Stern 1995:28). Learners have to develop certain stimuli towards learning directly from the educator, the family and the peers.

Learning is a process of modifying the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains. The process occurs within cognitive domains on six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Affective learning involves altering and modifying the existing emotional states or the creation of value judgements or promoting the attitude of like or dislike towards the subject matter. The behavioural domain involves the

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modification of physical skills (Zajda 1997:1). In brief, Schunk (1991:7) affirms that the behavioural theories entail the formation of associations between stimuli and responses, and the cognitive theories stress the acquisition of knowledge and cognitive structures. The educator has to be reflective and flexible enough in working out some strategies to minimize the unconscious negative effects on learners (Stern 1995:29).

### **1.1.3 Teaching and learning strategies**

Killen (1998:v,vi) points out that teaching and learning strategies describe the ways in which the educator applies skills, techniques and styles. The educator applies various teaching strategies to allow learners to demonstrate the mastered learning. According to Schunk (1991:91), individuals acquire learning strategies in a social environment; learning functional values and modelled behaviour; observing and acting according to the expected outcomes. The views of language theorists on the use of teaching and learning strategies in learning a language are discussed in the next section.

### **1.1.4 Language**

Human beings are species that communicate some continuum behaviours with a language to express emotions. These communicative behaviours resemble a language to the extent that there is flexibility and novelty of responses to a wide variety of circumstances (Winch 1990:9). McArthur (1999:15) affirms that human beings go through four communicative shifts



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in the capacity to communicate. These shifts in language usage are speech (such as verbal speech), all the writing systems of the world (such as books), printing (such as typography) and telecommunications (such as radio). Through these shifts, language of learning (such as English) acquires a prestige and social significance (Webb 1998:149). English has also ridden the crest of this particular wave in addition to whatever other social forces have propelled it into its current prominence.

According to Wadsworth (1978:68), language also refers to the child's use of a symbol (a word) to represent an object. Most of the children represent objects internally after eighteen months and become capable of the use of sounds as representations. Schunk (1991:201) contends that by the age of three or four, virtually all children have learned a language. The essential language characteristics of the linguistic performance appear in speech and comprehension through adolescence and beyond when the learners' communicative competence develops.

Reinhold (1992:3,4) contends that one of the main aims of using a language, such as English, is to develop communicative competence. Communicative competence is the ability to linguistically apply the language correctly in real social context. Competency in using language can uplift the quality in which communication is done. The problem is the educators' inefficiency in using communicative strategies, especially when developing the learners' communicative competence.

Selaledi (1999:270), Desimone, Finn-Stevenson and Henrich (2000:269) assert that low self-efficacy of certain educators and the subsequent poor

quality teaching stem from a lack of teaching competence. This is especially true in the previously disadvantaged schools. Educators who are, because of the afore-mentioned, unable to implement relevant communicative strategies in the ESL classroom, are not seen as efficient.

Heugh *et al.* (1995:24) point out that educators and learners in the ESL classroom are involved in the communicative process when using strategies such as direct instruction, discussion, group work, co-operative learning, problem solving, learner research and performance activities effectively. Educators need to integrate these strategies in ESL teaching and learning. The language skills of writing, listening, reading and speaking are needed by ESL learners in order to complete the task-based activities that form part of the communicative approach. Learners are to be given the opportunity to be actively involved in task-based activities such as debates, discussion and problem solving.

According to Leamson (1999:66), learners verbalise thoughts via inventive language. The implication of inventing a language is that learners have to “force” their thoughts in creating sentences. When these sentences are invented, words are verbalised or written down. The ESL educator should aim to activate the language senses of the learners in order to enforce verbal thought. This may lead learners to engage in activities that aim at eliciting coherent speech and writing. Such activities help to convert “fuzzy associations” in the brain into “firm verbalised ideas” (Leamson 1999:116). Through participation in the learning activities that form part of the communicative approach, learners become actively involved in their own learning.



Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:12) view the use of the communicative approach in ESL activities as an aim towards effective communication. Learners should work collaboratively in pairs or groups in order to enhance ESL. The ESL educator should guide the process while learners provide outputs such as dialogues, role-plays and games. The teaching and learning of ESL through the communicative approach would help learners to prepare themselves for life. Group work and co-operative learning as communicative teaching strategies are very popular, because learners become actively involved in the learning process. Such communicative activities provide learners with opportunities to speak and listen. Learners acquire knowledge and are able to express their innermost feelings orally.

Storti (1990:32) together with Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997:152,155) assert that communicative strategies are favourable tools when it comes to the acquisition of grammar knowledge in ESL. Role-plays and performance activities are tasks that enhance the opportunities to acquire the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. For instance, grammar knowledge involves not only the learning of certain rules, but also entails learning how to manipulate language devices well in conveying certain meanings.

Okita (1997:53) provides a strategy on how to improve English language learning openly in real and authentic conversations. The language strategy emphasizes the idea that, becoming involved in real conversations does not only improve learners' communicative and cultural competencies, knowing the use and the origin of English, but there is also an awareness in broadening the learners' own horizons. In the ESL classroom, conversations

that are created through debates or dialogues, modify the learners' communicative abilities by means of acquiring language skills. In groups or pairs, learners openly exchange thoughts verbally. The whole process is one of using thoughts through the exchange of words and it is the manner in which the individual learners can acquire the relevant communicative skills from one another.

Sakian (1997:54) experiments with radio programmes as a strategy to assist in the teaching of ESL. Radio programmes such as talk shows on current topics and contemporary events that affect the community, provide opportunities for learners to openly make language inputs and meaningful expressions in the ESL classroom. Radio programmes also prepare learners for authentic communication, as well as independent language enrichment in the environment outside the class situation.

Brooks (1995:39) is of the opinion that English becomes standardized in any environment due to the situation in which its users find themselves. In South Africa, English is used as a language of instruction in all of the previously disadvantaged black schools. English becomes conceptualized as the language that promotes wider communication (Krige, Cairns, Makalima and Scott 1994:129).

Ali (1995:61) and Ntlhakana (2000:12) assert that communication promotes growth of intelligent, creative and lateral thinking, and encultures learners with English values. The deepening of English ideas and values is a strong language loyalty to English. Learners develop themselves when they use



English and communicate in it. The inability to exercise the use of English in the ESL classrooms will hamper learners' competency in communication.

According to Heugh *et al.* (1995:9,11), the majority of learners from previously disadvantaged schools battle with ESL communication related activities, because they are not proficient in English. ESL educators need to change from an educator-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. This change will affect the strategies of ESL educators as they are used to the previously traditional teaching and learning. Traditional teaching strategies in the languages, such as the use of the telling method hamper the learners' cognition and as a result lead to underachievement.

In South Africa, language has played an important role in shaping the socio-political history of the country. Language has shaped up nationalism and has maintained a struggle for and against inequality. Prior to the new democracy that came into effect in 1994, English and Afrikaans were the official languages while all other indigenous languages were marginalized and not elevated (African National Congress 1995:65). Language had a detrimental effect with regard to the image it created in South Africa (Finchilescu and Nyawose 1998:54). Steyn (1993:185), Unterhalter, Wolpe and Botha (1991:112-116) are of the opinion that English attains the national unity and is the lingua franca that links other languages, regardless of the socio-economic status in South Africa. Above all, English fosters unity among different language groups in South Africa. Hence, in most of the previously disadvantaged schools English is used to learn other subjects.

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## 1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

ESL acquisition emerges as a challenge to the vast majority of learners for whom English is not a first language. This problem also manifests itself in the previously disadvantaged black schools in South Africa. According to Schlebusch (2000:38), the problem is brought about by lack of English proficiency of learners before entering the Senior Phase.

Rossel and Baker (1996:392) maintain that in order to become proficient in a second language, learners need to be exposed to the second language under optimal conditions from six to eight years. Optimal conditions would imply excellent educators, a sound socio-economic background, efficient educational resources and prolonged use of the first language in educational situations. This is currently not the case in most schools in South Africa.

English instruction has for a long time been modelled on the extreme conservative ESL teaching and learning methods. There have been certain mono-linguistic intolerant attitudes far removed and deviant from proper English (Hibbert and Makoni 1997:5). Learners who could neither speak nor write English with a degree of proficiency were thus able to pass the subject (Murray and Van der Mescht 1996:256).

Strategies need to be implemented to alleviate English deficiencies when learning content subjects. According to the 1991 census, 36,3% of the black population know English (speak and/or read and/or write it). The declining pass rates at the South African matriculation level bear testimony to the poor

performance of learners using English as a medium in various subjects. English declined the pass rate from 78,2% in 1978 to 45,40% in 1983. The present move to abandon such deficiencies is to use the communicative approach in the teaching and learning of languages (Ntlhakana 2000:12-13; Heugh *et al.* 1995:66).

This study is undertaken to establish whether the communicative approach has been effected successfully in the teaching and learning of ESL in Grade eight.

The research problem gives rise to the following questions:

- Is the communicative approach implemented successfully in Grade eight ESL classrooms in Thabong township in the Free State Goldfields?
- Which effective teaching and learning strategies should form part of the communicative approach in Grade eight ESL classrooms to render it (the communicative approach) successful?

### **1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

Aims to be realized are:

- to establish whether the communicative approach is facilitated successfully in Grade eight ESL classrooms.



- to advance the use of teaching and learning strategies which will aim to ensure the success of the communicative approach in Grade eight ESL classes.

#### **1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE STUDY**

The communicative approach in ESL enhances the manageable and meaningful use of language in the classroom and outside. Maartens (1992:121) has found that the communicative approach does not only describe learners' ability to use ESL accurately, but also appropriately in its social context. In the ESL classroom, learners use English during conversationally task-based activities through oral interaction with peers and the educator. In these types of activities learners need to show language competencies through outputs, such as in dialogues and dramatizations.

The ESL educator has to use different activities in order to assess the learners. The activities in the ESL classroom need to be structured in such a way as to achieve not only the twelve generic Critical Outcomes, but also the seven Specific Outcomes envisaged for the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC). ESL forms part of this Learning Area. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:28) assert that the Critical Outcomes are the end products that learners show when the task-based activities are assessed. The task-based activities enable learners to show capabilities of becoming efficient communicators, problem solvers and entrepreneurs.



The application of learners' capabilities depends on *what* to do and *how* to do the task-based activities. According to Hay and Fourie (1999:25,26), the principle of *what* the learners do in the task-based activities is not the critical part of assessment. The meaningful acquisition of *how* the task-based activities are applied is what needs assessment. Killen (1998:vii) asserts that assessment should be a continuous process and not only an end product, such as summative assessment. Continuous assessment becomes a process that involves among others, effective planning on what to assess, clear communication between educators and learners, adequate observation and inputs by learners, simple recording and discovery of ESL learning.

According to Van der Merwe and Van Niekerk (1994:12), English is the first language of 9% of the South African citizens. English learning stems from the previously marginalization of other languages in South Africa. These languages consist of the Nguni languages (such as SeXhosa, SeZulu, SeTsonga, SeVenda, SeShona and SeNdebele) and Sotho languages (such as South-Sotho, SePedi and SeTswana). Ethnocentricity in multicultural and multilingual classes may have the effect of developing ESL learners' competency in acquiring English as a second language. Learners exchange their cultures and therefore assist each other on the road to become competent in the use of English as one common form of language of learning. Competency in ESL multicultural classes may also be promoted by tolerance as learners share ideas from their different cultures. Tolerance makes learners to understand the uniqueness of each other's culture. Chick (1996:330) has found that tolerance nurtures learners in becoming communicatively competent.

Smit (1996:77,78) and Ndebele (1986:14) assert that as a form of social change, English is the preferred contextualised language of learning in the majority of secondary schools in South Africa. The communicative approach to ESL teaching and learning therefore has the opportunity to play a major role in the effective acquisition of ESL for Grade eight learners.

## 1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research method, which is ethnographic in nature. Kincheloe and MacLaren (1994:76) assert that in such a qualitative study, the researcher learns directly from the subjects' perspective and personal experiences. The researcher is part of the study, but does not manipulate the information that is gathered. The qualitative enquiry is therefore seen as most appropriate for this study. In the enquiry, the researcher directly observes the situation, comes into contact with the subjects through interviews, and describes the situation the way it is seen.

Well-collected qualitative data focus on ordinary events in their natural settings (like the classroom and the entire school), and are not improvised or simulated. In this study the researcher will gather data from the subjects in their natural settings.

→ Data collection

Data was collected from the Grade eight ESL learners, as well as ESL educators through the use of observations and interviews. In this study, classroom observations are followed by semi-structured interviews with the selected subjects. As an anthropologist, the researcher uses the method of



column  
non-participant observation to acquire information. During a period of five weeks, the researcher will observe each Grade eight ESL classroom that forms part of the accessible population in each school. Observations are done after permission has been granted by the Grade eight ESL educators involved. Cohen and Manion (1994:284-286) assert that interviews can provide the kind of in-depth data that cannot be obtained from a questionnaire. It is most suitable for asking questions that cannot be effectively structured into a multiple-choice format. A tape-recorder was used to assist the researcher during the interpretation and analysis of data. According to Borg, Gall and Gall (1993:114) audio-taping is accurate as it avoids biases, overlooking of aspects and using researchers' preconceived ideas.

→ Data analysis

The quota sampling strategy is used in selecting the target population of five schools. The strategy of quota sampling enables the researcher to identify the variables according to the context of the target group under study (Brown and Dowling 1998:31). Schools with Grade eight classes are chosen from the previously disadvantaged community of Thabong township, in the Lejweleputswa district.

purposive sampling

The comprehensive census in 1991 reveals that Lejweleputswa (the previous Welkom district) had an enrolment of 25132 learners, 616 educators and 35 schools. Lejweleputswa is a concentrated area where the educational needs of the previously black population exist because of an inadequate educational infrastructure (Krige *et al.* 1994:153,197). Black language groups dominate the entire Free State province where Lejweleputswa district is situated. This district has 83% black language speakers, 2% English

speakers and 15% Afrikaans speakers. In the classrooms, the learner to educator ratio of the previously disadvantaged black schools in Lejweleputswa ranges from forty to one up until fifty to one and is regarded as a highly disadvantageous community (Krige *et al.* 1994:1,69).

The population and sample is set out in Table 1. In this table, fifty learners and ten educators are selected for the Grade eight ESL interviews randomly in a systematic sampling method. Sowell (2001:45) affirms that the criteria used for systematic sampling is by arranging lists with names of the accessible population in alphabetical order and randomly selecting the first names. The remaining names of the subjects that are to be included in the sample are selected by taking every fifth learner and every second educator from each list of the accessible population. Each of the learners' lists is divided into male and female subjects so that the sample balances sex characteristics horizontally according to the number of the actual subjects, and to get more information from the wider spectrums of learning situations.

*purposeful sampling - sample is chosen with purpose of a location to a k criterion*

Population	:	Thabong township (Lejweleputswa)
Target population	:	Five Thabong Secondary Schools
Accessible population	:	The Grade eight ESL classrooms (used for observations)
Sample (subjects)	:	Ten learners and two educators from each of the five schools (selected for the semi- structured interviews)

*sample frame*

**Table 1: The Grade eight ESL population (Thabong - Lejweleputswa)**  
(Adapted from Sowell 2001:44)

## **1.6 DEMARCATION OF STUDY**

The study is carried in the Didactic field of Education. The geographical delimitation is Thabong township in the Free State Province of South Africa.

## **1.7 COURSE OF STUDY**

Chapter One will serve as the introductory orientation to the study. The problem formulation focuses on the use of various ESL strategies in advancing English teaching and learning. The communicative approach gives solution to the problem why English is not communicated well in the subject, ESL. The qualitative research design is discussed.

Chapter Two will comprise a literature review on current ESL teaching methods and strategies that effect English learning in South Africa.

Chapter Three will comprise a discussion on the communicative approach. An explanation is done on how ESL is integrated in LLC (OBE) in the Senior Phase (Grade eight).

Chapter Four will contain the research design, data collection, reporting and analysis.

Chapter Five consists of the conclusions drawn and recommendations made. Future study opportunities in this field are also mentioned.



## CHAPTER TWO

# THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In ESL, both the educator and learners interact in a meaningful way so that communication emerges. Schuster and Gritton (1986:13) use the suggestopedia method as an accelerative learning model for communication to show the educator's and learners' interaction. Suggestopedia tries to develop the learners' personalities in a positive learning environment. A fundamental concept in suggestopedia is that communication can be improved considerably both between the educator and learners, and in the memories when learners comprehend the use of language .

Van Schalkwyk (2001:3) defines communication as a two-way process in which feedback takes place when a certain medium is in use. The medium creates understanding not only to the educator (*the encoder of inputs*), but also and most importantly to learners (*the decoders of outputs*). The educator and learners use the four skills of language (that is speaking, reading, listening and writing skills) in the ESL classroom when the communicative approach is applied, with the aim of enhancing a meaningful interaction. In teaching and learning, meaningful interaction that takes place

between the educators and learners brings about effective ESL communication.

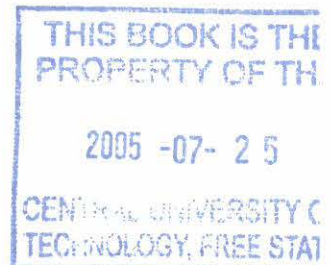
Educators and learners interact orally in the ESL communicative tasks such as discussions and dialogues. ESL is integrated with the use of any of the four language skills interchangeably to communicate tasks. Communication is done internally with the use of intrapersonal communication as well as externally by interpersonal, mass and extrapersonal communication (Van Schalkwyk 1986:1).

Intra-communication refers to the self-reflection or a debate conducted within one's conscience (Huebsch 1995:2). The external communication of tasks with a group of learners is done through interpersonal communication (Addey and Andrew 1990:54). Mass communication involves virtually simultaneous communication of the same message by a sender to many receivers, each of whom receives and interpretes the message individually (Van Schalkwyk 2001:6). Extrapersonal is not relevant to this study as it involves communication between human beings and animals, plants and lifeless objects (Van Schalkwyk 2001:5). Communication by individual learners includes the way in which the personal inner thoughts (inputs) are formed into audible expressions (outputs) towards the educator and other learners. In ESL teaching and learning communication flows from the conscious mind of the speaker (the educator) through his/her paraconscious, through some form of transmission (English), through the paraconscious of the recipient (a learner) and finally to the recipient's conscious mind.

Davison and Dowson's (1998:145) three ways in learning a language include the use of a language as a medium to communicate ideas, the implicit expression of ideas produced through the skills of speaking and writing (inputs), and the explicit construction of meaningful tasks (outputs). ESL is communicated explicitly through verbal or non-verbal means in order to create meaningful tasks. In South Africa, the ESL educator usually uses probes when using language so that it becomes meaningful to learners. Success in teaching and learning is related to the way education is brought by the educator to bring aspects of reality within the reach of the learner (Jacobs, Gawe and Vakalisa 2002:240).

## 2.2 EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mothata, Lemmer, Mda and Pretorius (2000:x-xiii) assert that the South African system of education has a foundation of the past and the present. The previous dispensation (before 1994) consisted of a tri-cameral parliament with each having its own education department (Whites, Coloureds and Indians). After the 1994 democratic general elections, the new government has restructured the education system. The provision is stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. The present South African education system has decentralised departments provincially and in district levels. A new curriculum (Curriculum 2005) and a new teaching approach for South Africa (Outcomes-Based Education) have also been implemented (Spady and Schlebusch 1999:35).





The African National Congress (1995:67) maintains that the OBE approach was to be introduced into the South African schools in 1998. The OBE approach to education commenced with Grade one in 1998, and was introduced into Grade eight in 2001. On 24 March 1997 the Minister of Education announced that OBE culminates the process of Curriculum 2005 (C2005). All teaching and learning had to take place using the OBE approach to facilitate the implementation of C2005 (Mothata *et al.* 2000:xix).

C2005 provides for eight Learning Areas in the Senior Phase (Grade 7-9). These Learning Areas are: Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC); Human and Social Sciences (HSS); Technology (Tech); Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences (MLMMS); Natural Sciences (NS); Arts and Culture (AC); Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) and Life Orientation (LO). ESL resorts under the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication. It is also envisaged by the Constitution of South Africa that all learners should choose their own language of study and of learning. English continues to enjoy the status of language of learning (Heugh *et al.* 1995:65).

According to the Department of Education (2001a:14-15), the additive approach to multilingualism paves the way in establishing English to be the language that is used as a language of learning in all of the previously disadvantaged schools. The South African education is multilingual in nature. All state schools in South Africa use either English or Afrikaans as a language of learning. Most schools from the previously disadvantaged communities use English as language of learning. As part of the LLC

Learning Area, learners then have to enrol for their first language, as well as for a second language (ESL). In such instances one language (for example the home language, Sesotho) is offered as a first language and the other (for example the additional language, English) as a second language.

In the past, most learning material for ESL were adaptations from Britain and the United States of America (USA) (Heugh *et al.* 1995:45). At present, ESL learners should be exposed to activities which relate to their life-world. Then only will the necessity of the use of English become clear to learners and will they be more enthusiastic in acquiring English.

English is a language of learning and it is in a high demand throughout schooling in South Africa. Learners spend twelve years engaging with it as a subject, as well as using it as a language of learning (Heugh *et al.* 1995:66). English is one of the eleven official languages in South Africa, as contained in the South African Constitution (RSA 1996a:14). The Constitution also states that learners have a right to learning through the language of their choice. All educational learning programmes have been structured to accommodate the diversities of multilingual classes (for official languages). The contents of these learning programmes are arranged in classes according to the needs of the language groups involved.

### **2.3 ESL AND THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH**

ESL stands on three legs in the South African educational system. These legs are for Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN), the Adult



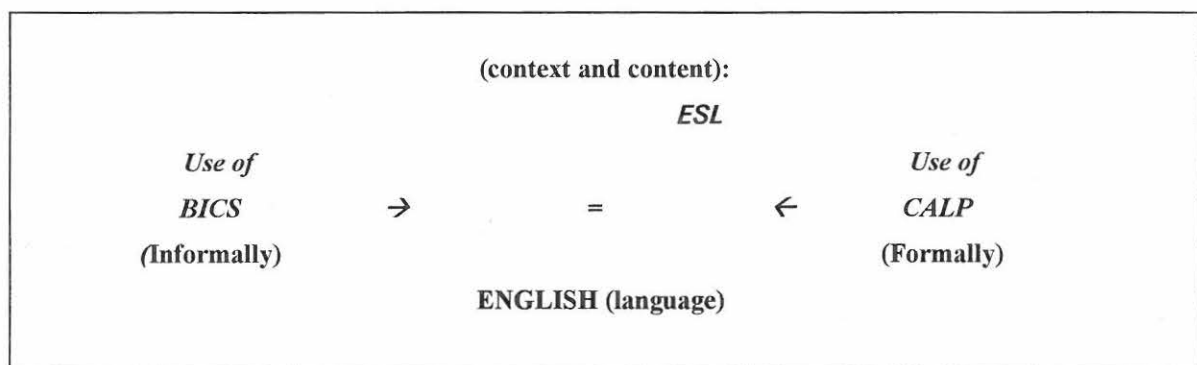
Basic Education and Training (ABET) and the mainstream education in the General Education and Training (GET), together with Further Education and Training (FET) bands. The communicative approach is used for all learners in these three legs. However, the present study is directed at the GET band, and more particularly the Senior Phase (Grade eight). The purpose of teaching and learning is to empower learners with skills and to get access to information, for example the ESL learners in the Learning Area: Literacy, Language and Communication (LLC), in order to play meaningful roles in the society (Spady and Schlebusch 1999:111).

The Department of Education (2001b:19-20) advocates that the use of a language is to enable the learners to balance the knowledge that is obtained from other Learning Areas and to integrate it in the ESL classroom. In such a manner, the learners would be able to apply the skills, knowledge and values within all Learning Areas. The next figure (i.e. Figure 1, page 24) illustrates the way in which English is used in the ESL classroom in order to create meaningful communication.

Figure 1 is an illustration where according to Sparg and Winberg (1999:84), Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) assume that learners have the English language skills to communicate in everyday life. Orpen (1993:18-20) contends that fluency in BICS is achieved when the learners are competent enough to show skills in analysing, synthesizing and creatively using the language of English. The idea is to emphasise an understanding in the use of BICS and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). CALP enables the learners to become competent communicators. Learners are capable to show various life skills such as the

ability to be engaged in cognitively demanding and problem-solving tasks. During informal conversations, learners show BICS, and need CALP for formal academic conversations. It is the ideal for learners in the ESL classroom to attain a CALP level of English proficiency in order to be successful academically. Language competence at the BICS level does not equip the learners with adequate proficiency to perform cognitive operations.

Cummins (1984:137) is of the opinion that the cognitive aspects can be explained in terms of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. On the conversational proficiency (surface level), **knowledge** (something you previously encountered or learned and remembered), **comprehension** (grasp of basic meaning), and **application** (use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations), are involved. The deeper levels of cognitive/academic proficiency would involve **analysis** (when a whole is broken down into its parts), **synthesis** (putting elements into a coherent whole) and **evaluation** (judging the adequacy of ideas).



**Figure 1: *Balancing BICS and CALP in ESL***  
 (adapted from Sparg and Winberg 1999:84)

The national curriculum framework for ESL anticipates to have learners who would be developed to be able to critically reflect on using English competently. Learners would be able to critically plan and organise ESL communication in a creative way. Learners would hopefully collaborate English communication effectively with all people.

## **2.4 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF ENGLISH**

Van Schalkwyk (2001:3) describes effective communication as a process that leads to meaningful understanding of the language. Communication is a process that involves the way how to achieve the desired ESL outputs. Learners develop life roles such as communicators, researchers and problem solvers due to the ESL outcomes which they achieve. The outcomes develop into outputs that enable learners to effect communication. The outputs are the learning experiences that learners become involved with in the classroom. It is expected of the educator to facilitate learning through a range of experiences, rather than simply allowing learners to have learning experiences (Killen 1998:vii).

The main point in effective ESL communication is around the inputs made by the educator and outputs shown by learners. The educator makes inputs by presenting some strategies such as facilitating the communication process with learners. Learners show outputs such as Specific Outcomes that are achieved in the communicative tasks. The educator's inputs, such as ESL teaching strategies, are shaped by the learners' intuitive skills. In order to develop learning into a learner-centred approach, it is important that every ESL learning experience allows freedom of expression from learners



towards educators in a way as to enhance communication process. It is essential that ESL teaching and learning should move away from the educator-centredness to a learning-centred approach.

In a learning-centred approach the educator and the learners are involved in a learning dialogue. That is, the dialogue approach is neither learning content-, learner-, nor educator-centred, but learning-centred. The educator guides, facilitates and mediates (Gravett 2001:36). Both the educator and the learner are in a dynamic state of reciprocal unity by means of exchanging roles so that communication becomes enhanced (Gravett and Henning 1998:61).

#### **2.4.1 Communication in ESL**

Communication in ESL is effective when it becomes a meaningful process and not a product in the making. According to Saiz (1990:23), learners resort to various communication strategies in order to avoid embarrassment and some difficulties in conveying messages. The commonly used learners' strategies include shifting the use of words from English to mother tongue or mime by means of non-verbal skills. Learners will develop certain skills when reaching the Specific Outcomes set for ESL, and as such will internalise the meaning of the outcomes they achieve. Communication becomes a meaningful process when the educator is able to exercise effective ESL strategies so that learners can acquire the educator's inputs. Effective communication results from educators' efforts (on how learners have to effect ESL) and the application of the learners' insight (on what ESL

is about) by means of the context (ESL) where communication is done. In that way, co-operative learning develops as both the educator and learners share ideas (Davidson and Worsham 1992:xv).

Gravett (2001:38) maintains that a co-operative learning environment calls forth meanings and connotations such as collaboration, working together, democracy, socialisation, sharing and joint effort teaching between learners and educators. The verb form of the word “co-operative”, namely “co-operate”, consists of two parts: co, which means together, and operate, which means to work or to be in activity. The learning environments that are threatening, do not promote co-operative learning. Some studies have shown that “minimised” brain function is the results of threats to the learners’ way of developing ideas. When the brain perceives some sort of threat, the individual learner becomes isolated. The brain ends-up becoming less capable of “planning, pattern detention, judgement skills, receiving information, creativity, classifying data and problem-solving” (Jensen 1996:24).

The context in which ESL communication is facilitated becomes characterised by the contents of the learning environment where teaching and learning takes place. The characteristics of the context where ESL teaching and learning is communicated involves what Davidson and Worsham (1992:7) refer to as dimensions of learning. The educators’ and learners’ attitudes, perceptions, knowledge (its acquisition, integration, extension and use) and the habits of the minds - all constitute the dimensions of learning. The process of effective ESL teaching and learning refers to all the personal traits of positive behaviour by the educator in making a

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meaningful communication to the learners. Effective teaching and learning strategies, the communicative type of activities and the learners' continuous involvement result in the meaningful communication of outputs.

#### **2.4.2 Language and cognition**

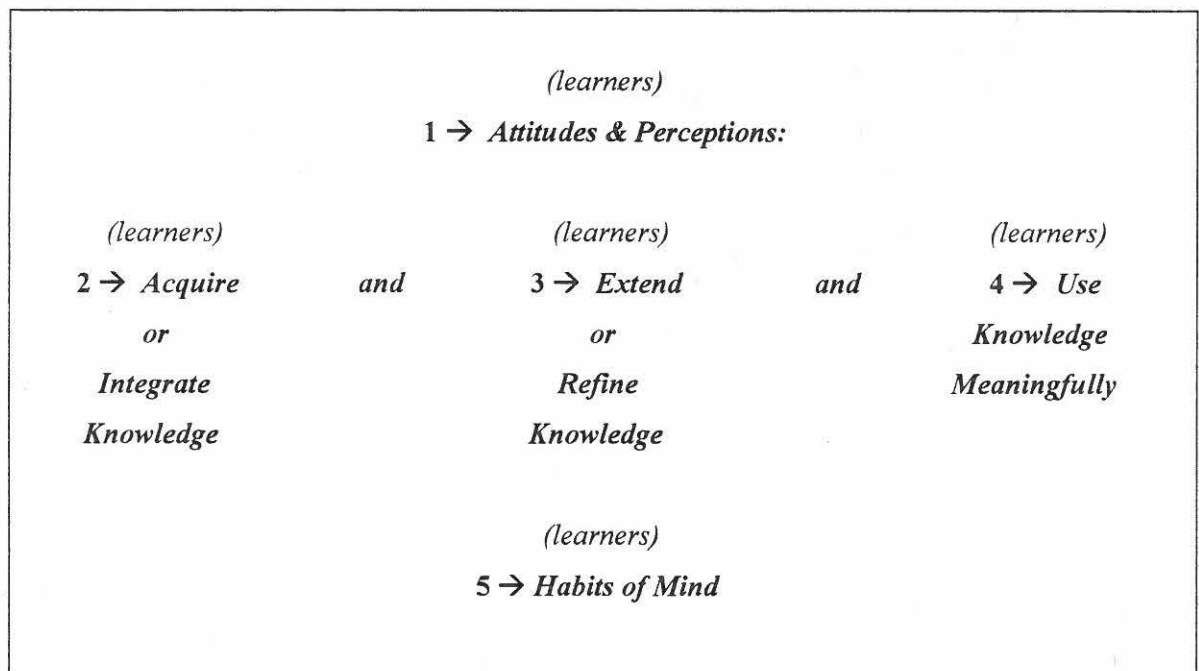
The product in ESL communication is the ability to conceptualise the input of ESL, and also the learners' ability to assimilate information well. The next framework (Figure 2, page 29) refers to the manner in which effective ESL teaching and learning becomes meaningful in the communication of English, providing five phases on how effective communication is achieved.

In Figure 2, learners show some negative and positive attitudes towards ESL. Attitudes are the previous knowledges that were perceived by the individual learner. As the learner perceives ESL learning, the new knowledge is acquired and becomes integrated into the mind. The learner starts to seek advice, becomes sensitive to feedback that is received from the educator. Later, the learner extends and refines the new knowledge that was acquired earlier. The entire process entails the habits of the mind. Effective thinking (which later develops into effective communication) becomes a meaningful process when the learner is able to use the acquired knowledge meaningfully.

Effective communication takes place when a repeated learning stabilizes certain appropriate and desirable synapses in the brain (Leamson 1999:5). Caine and Caine (1994:81) assert that effective brain function results when patterns of information are generated. The brain resists, having meaningless



patterns imposed on it. Meaningless patterns are isolated pieces of information unrelated to what make sense to the learner. Hence, the more links the brain can make with the existing knowledge and experience, the easier it becomes for the brain to make sense of the information and the better it will be remembered. The educators' means of developing ESL cognition in learners is by making the learners actively involved in teaching and learning. Gravett (2001:32) maintains that a prolonged activation of the cortex forces thinking skills into the learners' thoughts. Learners need to struggle with the language by emerging verbal thoughts in activities that aim at eliciting coherent speech and writing. Such activities help cognition by converting some associations into firm verbalised ideas (Leamson 1999:116).



**Figure 2: The five Dimensions of Learning**  
(adapted from Davidson and Worsham 1992:8)

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### 2.4.3 Language constructivists

Schlebusch (2000:39) asserts that the language constructivists; Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky confirm studies around the theories on cognitive development. The development of cognition takes place only when previous conceptions change with the introduction of the new information.

The language constructivists such as Piaget (a Swiss researcher) advocates that structural change is a necessary condition for development; Bruner (an American researcher) emphasises both the internal and external functions as well as structural changes brought about by function; and finally Vygotsky (a Russian researcher) stresses the reciprocal relationship between structure and function, and that knowledge is the content that has to be internalised to form cognition (Zajda 1997:12). Sparg and Winberg (1999:103) define cognition as the ability to show understanding of knowledge on what is recognised, defined, identified, reported and described. Cognition depends on the five dimensions of learning (the discussed Figure 2, page 29). It is because of the learners' attitudes and perceptions that the new knowledge becomes acquired. Learners integrate the old and new knowledge into the mind pertaining to the way how the new knowledge becomes facilitated by the educator. The educator develops strategies in order to simplify teaching. Later, the learners build concepts by means of internalising the concepts and cognition becomes developed.

Piaget's theory (in Hergenhahn and Olsen 1997:282) on hereditary characteristics assumes that learners construct concepts according to the

characteristics on how learning is presented. The ESL learning has to be presented to learners by the educator in such a way that learning becomes discovered. The educator is a mediator in making learning possible as the learners make discovery of learning through assimilation. In Piagetian terms, new information is assimilated into the existing knowledge base - and - integrated with what is already known (Davidson and Worsham 1992:9). A positive assimilation and acquisition of information entail meaningful learning because it is the way how the educator mediates and the learners grasp some meanings, that learning becomes determined.

The basis of making meaning out of a language lies with the cognitive representation that is formed by the learners. According to Zadjia (1997:13-14), Piaget views the cognitive development as a sequence of structural transformations, due to the developmental phases that the child undergoes. Cognition develops by refining and transforming mental structures. The non-cognitive structures that develop in the first year of life (schemata) are based on innate reflexes, from the genetic aspects of the ocular sensorimotor activity (Shulman, Restaino-Baumann and Butler 1985:26). Slowly these reflex movements become differentiated into becoming goal-oriented actions. At approximately eighteen months, the child takes the first step towards conscious activities that lead to the construction of cognitive structures. Cognitive development begins as a schema or structure; later this structure changes, producing a new structure at a level higher and therefore qualitatively different than the previous one.

Shulman *et al.* (1985:39) postulate that development consists of the construction of new representation of objects, of self and of others, and



consequently of new programs. That is, the social environment where learning becomes developed, determines the self-image of the learner. That is why the learner represents the cognitive aspects of the social environment where learning develops.

Bruners' theory concerning the development of cognitive representation confirms that age-related changes in behaviour and thinking are largely the result of the acquisition of new, more flexible and more powerful types of representation (Zadja 1997:16). Bruner distinguishes three modes of representation as follows: the enactive mode (representation by doing), the iconic mode (representation by conception or spatial schema) and the symbolic mode (representation by means of description in language).

Vygotsky (in Zajda 1997:23) contends that language acquisition is a paradigm between learning and development. Initially, language originates as a means of communication between the child and those in his environment. Later, after the conversion to inner speech, does the child's thinking becomes organised into internal mental functions. Thinking and speech have different roots in cognitive development. Thinking is pre-linguistic and speech is pre-intellectual. During the course of development, both are converted, thinking becomes verbal and speech becomes rational.

Ausubel (1968:127-128) contends that existing cognitive structures are the principal factors that influence meaningful learning. The new material is learned in relation to the previously learned background of relevant concepts, principles and information. Hence, it becomes evident that the substantive and organisational properties of this background crucially affect

both the accuracy and clarity of these emerging new meanings and their immediate and their long-term retrievability. Mediation replaces the original physical stimulus of the educator. The individual educator produces certain responses so that the learners could imitate them. The educator mediates by means of explaining the knowledges that are to be internalised by the learners.

Viewed from a social constructivist perspective, internalisation (by Vygotsky) and discovery of learning (by Bruner) are processes wherein complex psychological intra-actions such as thoughts, are mediated by social interactions such as speeches (Houser and Vaughan 1995:21). According to Schlebusch (2000:44), discovery learning is the rearrangement or the changing of information in such a way that the learners are able to develop additional insights. The ESL educator mediates through scaffolding to enable the learners in discovering the new ESL learning. Scaffolding includes the use of probes and other strategies by the educator as a way to simplify the process of mediation. The other means of mediation imply the educators' efforts by modelling, demonstrating and coaching as forms of assistance (Gravett 2001:21).

Bruner (in Sutherland 1992:60,61) highlights that before learners make meaning to the newly presented matter, the specific learners ask themselves questions such as *what the material is all of?* and *what can the material be related to?* so as to interpret and internalise the new learning. Hence Von Glassersfeld (1995:145) maintains that the user of any language, has to construct and interpret the experience of the new language that is to be received. The interpretation depends on the environment in which the user



is found. In the environment where the educator becomes unable to simplify the new knowledge to the learner with relevant strategies, there would be no effective teaching and learning. Then, communication would break down. The correct way to create meaningful teaching and learning brings about a co-operative learning environment where the learners would experience drives such as we are human and we want to be active participants and learners in this educational experience (Galbraith 1991:17). Hence, the educator would respond in this way: “As educator and learners, we are partners in solving learning problems. I want to help you, and it is good to seek help” (Wlodkowski 1999:102).

According to Kasambira (1997:30), the educator needs to motivate the learners to engage into activities that will result in the desired learning. Motivation is whatever it is that arouses the learners to do whatever it is they can do. If the learners become motivated, then they are excited, interested, enthused and want to do the tasks. The educators’ behaviour is strongly related to learner-motivation and by extension, to learning (Zajda 1997:2). Learners become motivated to learning by the environment created by the educator. Mediation is a powerful intervention produced by the educator towards learners (Vygotsky 1997:xxiii).

The educator uses relevant strategies in simplifying the new knowledge, and the learners assimilate the new knowledge in an easier way. Then, the product of effective teaching and learning results into a meaningful process. The product is the new knowledge (cognition) which the learners develop. In ESL, the Specific Outcomes direct the new knowledge.



Cognition in ESL outcomes depends on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Wertsch and Tulviste (1996:56), the theory of Vygotsky on the ZPD is defined as the distance between the actual learners' level of development and the higher level of potential development. Vygotsky (1978:86) affirms that actual development is determined by problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under the educators' guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

In the context of this study, the learners' actual levels of development are the levels which the learners have not internalised ESL and effected communication well in Grade eight. Learners are used to the educators' traditional strategies of teaching and learning in ESL. Learners have not as yet acquired enough knowledge in order to internalise the new ESL knowledge that is to be presented. The use of the communicative approach in ESL would lead the learners in becoming productive and communicatively competent. The learners' higher levels of potential development are becoming communicative competent. Competency is the ability of the Grade eight learners to use ESL successfully during conversations, and also the ability to follow linguistic principles of ESL when the Grade eight learners apply English language.

#### **2.4.4 ESL communication as a product**

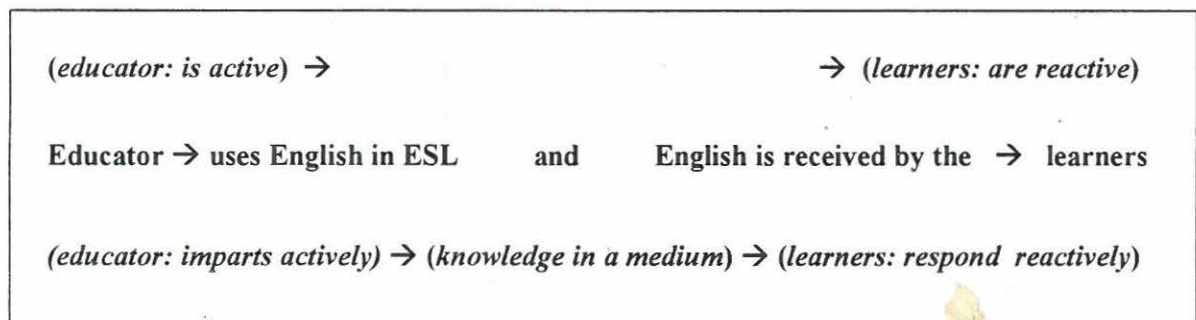
ESL communication is a product when learning strives for inputs only. Product becomes inputs when ESL learning does not form a comprehensible

input and thus, becomes useless. According to Dornyei (1991:33-35), Stephen Krashen's theory of language and learning on input and output hypothesis emphasises that input becomes meaningful when input is turned into output. Input is the actual learning that is received by the learners. In Malan's (1997:15) version, input is all that is done and used in making learning to take place. That includes all the strategies that the educator uses to enhance the standard of teaching and learning.

The manner in which input that is received has to be tuned to the levels of the learners, becomes known as  $(i+1)$ . The  $(i)$  is the level of the individual learner, and  $(+1)$  is an input that is tuned or a small jump ahead. For example, in writing activities such as essay writing, the learners' ability to write is shown by the input  $(i)$ . The educators' reinforcement skills such as when corrections are done, becomes an ideal input  $(i+1)$ .

The  $(i+1)$  represents the ESL skills which the learners show in order to prove comprehensible inputs. Learners need to use English practically themselves. The educator also needs to give the learners chance in order to expose understanding of explicit knowledges of the linguistic rules (language competency). Unless outputs are done by the learners, ESL learning remains a product. Learners who are not given opportunities to express their language capabilities, show reactive and passive learning styles by means of not providing responses to questions that are asked in classes. The next figure (Figure 3, page 37) illustrates the way how passive communication (done by the educator to the learners) creates ESL products (learners' reactivity and passiveness).

Figure 3 signifies how the encounter, i.e. the ESL educator directs communication process towards reaching the end-product (goal). The goal of the educator is seen as imparting the knowledge only and not making a way for the learners to experiment effectively with the use of English. The end-product results with the learners' inability to communicate well in English, and sometimes the inability to grasp the contents of ESL. A negative rather than a positive influence on the communication process results in meaningless communication, and that is what the Tubbs-Moss model of communication is criticised for. Tubbs and Moss illustrate communication as spiral and cyclical, a continuous process with neither a definite starting point nor a definite conclusion (Van Schalkwyk and Viviers 1992:8).



**Figure 3: *Meaningless ESL communication as a product***  
**(adapted from Van Schalkwyk and Viviers 1992:8)**

During communication the individuals meet in what Bruckmann called a common background (Van Schalkwyk 2001:28), the point where the backgrounds of both the educator and learners overlap. Meaningless communication becomes a product when communication process is done by



the educator alone, and in one direction. The educator does not involve the learners through the use of various skills in a communication process. However, when various English skills are utilised fully and meaningfully, communication is not a product but becomes a successful communication process. The communication process is reinforced by the educator through the use of various teaching and learning skills, such as the use of various approaches in ESL teaching and the use of relevant teaching methods for specific learning programmes. In ESL, the educator reinforces the learning content of ESL through methods such as self-activity and discussion, in the topics which need learners' expression of ideas. The educator is able to evaluate the success by receiving immediate feedback from the learners.

#### **2.4.5 ESL communication as a process**

Communication is a process when learning strives for both the use of inputs and outputs, striving to create a meaningful learning by means of the educators' and the learners' involvement in ESL teaching and learning respectively. The educator directs meaningful teaching to the learners in order to reach outputs. According to Dornyei (1991:34), outputs are the products of conscious attention in the use of language. The outputs are efficient expressions of the language in order to improve the uncertainties in the use of language. Therefore, the educator involves the learners in talks and other language activities such as role-play, dialogue and debating.

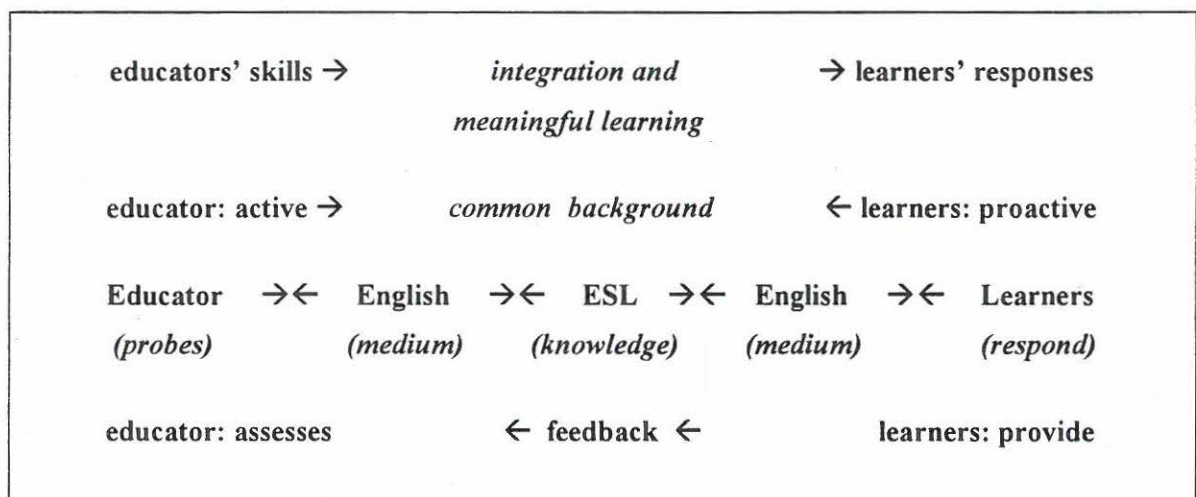
If the learners are given opportunities to proof the communicative skills, then the learners' ESL communication becomes a comprehensible output (is

meaningful). Jacobs *et al.* (2002:193) also emphasise communication by means of the principle of social skills acquisition. Effective learning is determined by the acquisition of special social skills through intrapersonal, interpersonal or intragroup means of communication. For example, a number of learners can be actively involved in activities such as small-group discussions or debating. Such activities enable the learners to remember and to apply knowledge easily in the communicative activities in and outside the classroom.

In Figure 4 (page 40), the educator directs ESL communication to the learners in order to reach the end-product (goal), with the integration of some skills. In learning the content of ESL, drama activities (for example) need the use of skills such as role-play for meaningful learning.

In role-play, learners provide feedback to the educator. Learners use English language to communicate the ideas. In communication, the educator is able to evaluate the use of the learners' language (BICS and CALP). That is, whether the learners have understood the use of role-play principles or not. In drama (for example), the learners would be able to express the ESL drama concepts through the use of English language. Learners would express the ESL drama concepts correctly because BICS and CALP have become balanced as levels of language learning, and connected to each other in providing one idea. Concepts are similar connections of new ESL information which the learners communicate (Langhan and Rodseth 1996:31-37). When English is used in ESL activities, it is vital that the learners understand the specific ESL concepts in order to be able to participate in conversations. Feedback can be enhanced (necessarilly) by the

educator when the learners show communication problems such as making syntax errors in ESL communication. After the learners' feedback, the educator uses probing strategies to enhance the learners' knowledge. Proactive participation and the involvement of the learners, create opportunities for a meaningful communication process in ESL. The next discussion is an overview of the basic approaches in teaching and learning. However, in ESL teaching and learning these approaches can be enhanced through the use of certain methods.



**Figure 4: *Meaningful ESL communication as a process***  
(adapted from Schuster and Gritton 1986:14 and  
Van Schalkwyk 2001:4,28)

## 2.5 THE APPROACHES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

An approach is done by the educator towards learners. It is also an attempt that is exercised meaningfully by means of teaching and learning. The



educator influences learners by driving the latter back to the track of teaching and learning (Allen 1990:52). In ESL, the educator can use the inductive and the deductive approaches to draw back teaching and learning. Enquiry which is done by both deductive and inductive approaches, creates an understanding to the seekers of knowledge (Kramer 1999:94), that is learners.

### **2.5.1 Inductive approach**

The inductive approach is used as a means of information processing model during the discovery of ideas. According to Joyce, Calhoun and Hopkins (1997:26-27,38-39), Hilda Taba has developed an inductive thinking model when processing information in order to reach certain conclusions. The purpose of this model is to enhance skills in hypothesis building. For instance, learners can be instructed by the educator to construct ESL knowledge by collecting information from various sources and to apply it according to instructions.

In writing activities, Clifford (1991:41) has discovered that in effecting the writing skills, learners start the writing process by generating ideas. Learners further organise the ideas according to the way the ideas suit their purpose. Learners finally apply the vocabulary, show syntax and punctuation of the information that is collected in order to convey certain messages. The basis of application of the collected information is to test the learners' understanding. Learners can be instructed to simulate or role-play activities that are characterised by the collected information.

Sometimes, the inductive approach can be used by means of questions only. The educator uses questions so that learners become involved and form concrete concepts of material to be learned. Questions can be used as “ice-breakers” and “energisers” to introduce a new theme, to help learners to relax or energise, and to create a warm and co-operative learning climate (Gravett 2001:67). At first, the educator makes an introduction of the lesson through the use of questions. Then, follows the learners’ interpretation of the lesson by means of comparing or associating the past knowledge that have been learned, and generalising or summarising the learned material. Finally, the new learned material is reinforced when it becomes applied. Reinforcement is the application of the learned material by means of class activities such as a classwork, a small test, an assignment or a test. The inductive approach is a prefix to the deductive approach as at times learning starts from the general to the particular.

### **2.5.2 Deductive approach**

According to Engelbrecht, Yssel, Griessel and Verster (1985:61), the deductive approach involves the educators’ lesson presentation whereby the material to be learned is approached from the general to the particular. The deductive approach also helps learners to apply the generalised principles to solve problems (Kramer 1999:94). Learners form concepts, make meaning and become communicative competent with the use of skills learned in ESL. The brainstorming session is a good example that shows how the formation of, for an example ESL statement is formed when using the deductive approach. When the learners use the brainstorming for revision and

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reinforcement of ESL learning, the time becomes saved and more communication problems are solved at a short space of time.

### **2.5.3 The teaching and learning methods**

Success in teaching and learning is measured in terms of a specific method that is used in the application of writing, listening, reading and speaking skills. According to Steyn, Badenhorst and Yule (1991:4), the teaching and learning methods refer to the ways in which instruction takes place. In brief, method is the practice of teaching. In ESL, teaching and learning methods include the educators' manner of effecting the learning programmes. For instance, when the individual educator facilitates the lesson on drama, the teaching and learning method that is to be used will not be the same like the method which is to be used in essay writing.

In Table 2 (page 45), Schuster and Gritton (1986:33) provide accelerative learning factors as used in the suggestopedia method.

Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1989:38), and Schuster and Gritton (1986:22-23) assert that suggestopedia optimizes the psychological forces of the learning environment. In Table 2 (page 45), Suggestopedia emphasizes the authority and a sympathetic attitude on the part of the educator, educator-learner confidence, the role of the environment and the untapped reserves of the learner. In the presentation of the materials, voice intonation and rhythm are stressed by the educator. The theory on suggestopedia comes from yoga: the educators' authority, the confidence and passivity by learners, the pleasant



positive environment, voice dynamics and rhythmic presentation. Suggestopedia promotes indirect attention to the didactic material and/or unconscious absorption of material while learners are relaxed.

In both the active and passive phases, the learners first pay active attention to the material and secondly let it passively go by while in a meditative state. Suggestopedia is a preferable method for this study because of the next principles. There is: unity of the conscious and paraconscious, the joy and absence of tension, and suggestion is the link to the reserves of the mind in learning. The basis of the word “suggestopedia” is that “suggesto” refers to suggestion and “pedia” refers to learning (Schuster and Gritton 1986:23).

In learning essay writing (for instance), the educator will use the self-activity method in order to allow the learners enough time to learn by being actively involved. Learners observe the examples from the educator by first listening to the educator’s instructions, investigate the possibilities of effecting the educator’s examples and finally experiment through the educators’ examples. Self-activity can be linked to self-discovery. Bruner, like Piaget (in Zajda 1997:18) emphasises that learning sink best if the learners discover by themselves (individually). In Bruners’ approach to classroom education, the educator plays a more significant role in allowing the learners to explore. The educator remains in the background and merely offers the learners suitable material. The self-discovery method assumes that learners have an intrinsic motivation to explore a subject independently (Zajda 1997:20).

### **ACCELERATIVE LEARNING FACTORS**

- Authority / Personality of educator
- Confidence of learners
- Positive environment
- Learners' potential
- Intonation / Tone of voice
- Rhythm / Rhythmic presentation of materials
- Mind / Body harmony
- Relaxed alertness
- Active / Passive phases
- Unconscious assimilation of materials
- Inner speech
- Memory training

**Table 2: *Common Accelerative Learning Factors (Suggestopedia)***  
**(adapted from Schuster and Gritton 1986:33)**

Listening in drama activities can be taught through the use of the telling method. The educator uses the lecture method in giving brief exposition of a theme as part of input, so as to inspire interest by sharing personal experiences with the learners (Gravett 2001:68). According to Kasambira (1997:70), one way of creating interest in the telling method is to use the rhetorical questions, humour, examples, illustration, voice variation, or audio-visual aids to maintain the learners' interest. The transmission of knowledge for activities such as narrating a drama or story is done by means

of the educators' talks while the learners are listening. However, the method is ineffective as more knowledge is produced by the educator rather than by learners. Prodromou (1992:103) puts a proof on effective individual involvement with the assertion that drama techniques draw on and develop the emotional and cognitive capacities of every individual. The drama activities appeal to imagination and powers of self-expression. Hence, not the educator only but learners also need to mime, role-play and perform other activities that are based on gestures or body movement.

A better form of involving learners in speaking is through the use of the discussion method. Kramer (1999:94) asserts that discussion is an indirect method of a high potential for building higher order thinking skills, personal values and individual responsibility for learning. The educator can involve the learners by means of the discussion method in the ESL debating activities such as to analyze a specific topic. The discussion method aims to involve the learners directly into the debating. Learners get involved through arguments and decision makings. The educator's task is to facilitate the debate by means of directing the questions around the topic that is discussed.

In reading learners involve themselves in the discussion through the use of the question-and-answer method on what they have read. Well constructed questions are useful in stimulating and encouraging learners to question themselves, their educator and the knowledge to which they are exposed to (Kasambira 1997:74). The existing knowledges of the learners become discovered by the educator through the use of questions. The learners' responses are the indicators of the level of understanding of each individual



learner. For example, activities on story telling can be turned into a reality (role-play) by means of asking learners questions based on aspects of what they have read. Learners can be asked to create a paragraph around the issue of “crime” (a topic). The reason why learners have to make responses (or find answers to problems) is to enhance the learners’ reasoning skills.

The problem-solving method enhances reasoning skills as it is a relevant method for the searching of responses, which can be used by learners. Kasambira (1997:78) maintains that changing frame of reference is another skill that enables the educator to acquire alternative ways of solving problems. Problem-solving is used by the educator to search for learners’ ideas, to discover information from the learners and for the learners to form conclusions independently. Learners can be asked to research information on the ways how to stop crime, as an essay or a debate. The problem-solving method is scientific in nature, as learners are directly involved in searching for information, and finding possible solutions to the problem.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION

As facilitators of ESL learning, educators are responsible for instructing learners with what to do. Instruction is an involvement of an expert in telling learners what to do in order to achieve a particular skills’ objective (Castling 1996:93), then learners demonstrate their skills after observation from the educator (an expert). The educator uses strategies as an art of managing ESL activities, through the use of probes when some of the learners experience difficulties. However, the use of specific ESL strategies

in teaching and learning is a way to evade the difficulties which some of the learners experience.

ESL strategies are enhanced through a specific approach, namely the communicative approach. The communicative approach directs ESL teaching and learning towards the development of the competent English learners.

The competent English learners would be characterised not by what the learners know, but by the learners' ability to demonstrate how the ESL outcomes are achieved. The educator's role is to facilitate the process of achieving the outcomes. The educator also implements the flexibility of the communicative strategies so that inputs turn into meaningful outputs. Therefore, through the communicative approach, Curriculum 2005 becomes a successful process that enhances the use of OBE in ESL teaching and learning. C2005 is a South African unique version of an Outcome-Based Education model that is set up (Spady and Schlebusch 1999:54).

Chapter 3 looks at how the communicative approach in ESL teaching and learning is effected through OBE.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **INTEGRATING THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH WITH OBE**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Since the reformation process in South African education, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) became the cornerstone in the planning of qualifications in education. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has been established under Act 58 of 1995 to supervise the development and implementation of the NQF. SAQA has the authority to establish committees for the development of unit standards in the various subfields. One of the objectives of the NQF is to transform and accelerate the redress of the past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment (Pretorius and Lemmer 1998:6).

Phillips (1997:1) maintains that the reformation process brings a character of flexibility that is envisaged in the OBE's approach. The flexibility of OBE is constituted in Curriculum 2005 (C2005). This curriculum is a challenge to the previously traditional education in South Africa, by integrating the communicative approach for languages in OBE. According to Kramer (1999:3), the traditional curriculum did not adequately prepare learners for



reality and future. The world changes, and so learners have to be instilled with values as successful and constructive citizens of the global community in the twenty-first century. However, the contents of C2005 have been contextualised so that they resemble lifelong learning. When SAQA offers learners the educational qualifications - the essential skills, knowledge, values and attitudes are already embodied into these qualifications (DoE 2001c:3).

### **3.1.1 SAQA**

According to the Human Sciences Research Council (1995:8-9), SAQA is the national authority that governs, manages and recognises all educational and training qualifications in South Africa. SAQA enhances the quality of education and training in South Africa through NQF. In the early 1990s the Department of Education of the previous government began a plan to reform. By 1994, the new government implemented a complete transformation of education within the NQF structure. The Learning Area Committee was established in 1996 to explore and propose Critical and Specific Outcomes for each Learning Area. In March 1997 the then Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, launched Curriculum 2005 which was to be phased in between 1998 and 2005 (Kramer 1999:129-131).

Olivier (1998:4) asserts that all the required South African educational credits, unit standards and qualifications at all levels nationally and internationally comply with standards that are laid down by NQF. Educational credits are values obtained from any learning programmes

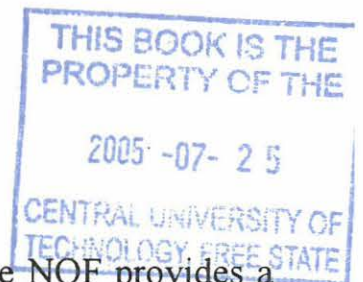
learners or students enrol for. These values represent the amount of learning, the level of difficulty and the perceived importance of particular learning, relative to a qualification as a whole. The values are expressed in numerical points, called credits (DoE 2001c:36).

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:4) maintain that Grade nine (Level 1 on the NQF) is the exit point in the Senior Phase (GETC), where learners can make the decision to continue with the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC, Levels 2-4) and Higher Education diploma or degrees (Levels 5-8). Each qualification is achieved according to the determined standards of units that are accredited to that specific qualification. That is, a Grade 9 learner who holds the GETC, would be able to continue and register for Grade 10 in the Further Education and Training (FET) band with at least 120 credits.

### 3.1.2 The NQF and its objectives

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:4) are of the opinion that the NQF provides a framework for lifelong educational learning in various formal, non-formal and informal qualifications. This framework documents broad outlines and structure for curriculum development (Lubisi, Wedekind, Parker and Gultig 1997:1). For instance, in Table 3 (page 52), lifelong learning is illustrated according to a variety of means within three bands, as grouped in the NQF.

Table 4 (page 53), illustrates the manner in which Levels 1-8 are constituted by SAQA for C2005. Education is differentiated into three bands, namely GET, FET and HET.



-	General Education and Training (GET) band, Level 1	: <i>Grades 1-9 of compulsory education</i>
-	Further Education and Training (FET) band, Levels 2-4	: <i>Grade 10-12 of senior secondary education</i>
-	Higher Education and Training (HET) band, Levels 5-8	: <i>All post-school education and training</i>

**Table 3: *The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)*,  
(adapted from Kramer 1999:130)**

Looking at the structure of the NQF in Table 4 (page 53), GET is the core band where the main interest of this study is based (Senior Phase – Grade eight). According to Kramer (1999:130-131), education in the GET band is compulsory and spreads from the Foundation Phase (Early Childhood Education to the end of Grade three), to the Intermediate Phase (Grades four to six) and finally the Senior Phase (Grades seven to nine). This band operates parallel to the system of adult education, which is Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET).

Since the establishment of SAQA, reformation has reached a high level of development in the South African education. Transition in education became an important process that maintained and corrected the state of inequality. The education system was restructured by politicians, educationists and academics by means of debates and conflicts. Some of the areas of concern were school governance, the unilateral restructuring of the curriculum and the future of education in South Africa (Pampallis 1993:1-3).



SAQA classifies the GETC and ABET qualifications in this way:

THE NQF STRUCTURE (GETC band)				
NQF Level	Learning Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates		
1	GETC band	Senior Phase Grade 7-9	-	ABET Level 4
1	GETC band	Intermediate Phase Grade 4-6	-	ABET Level 3
1	GETC band	Foundation Phase Grade 1-3	-	ABET Level 2
1	GETC band	Preschool Year 5	-	ABET Level 1

**Table 4: *The National Qualifications Framework (NQF): GETC***  
**(Lemmer and Badenhorst 1997:160)**

### 3.2 THE RATIONALE FOR TRANSITION IN EDUCATION

After the institution of a democratically elected government in 1994, the then Minister of Education, Professor Bengu, called for commissions on the renewal of education. The ministerial commission was to evaluate the practicality in implementing the new OBE approach.

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The rationale for transition in South Africa education are in accordance with the following principles:

- That education should be transformed and democratised, which means that school education must be transformed in accordance with the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom which underpin our constitution (RSA 1996a:13).
- The principles and values in accordance with the Constitution, that is education and training, is a basic human right that avails conditions of democracy, liberty, equality, justice and peace for lifelong learning (Pretorius 1998:3).
- An integrated approach to education and training. The White Paper on Education and Training (RSA 1995:15) sees the formation of C2005 for education and training as a sphere where learning of skills, knowledge and communication can be acquired.
- An outcomes-based approach to learning; that is, the integration of OBE and C2005 would also introduce an outcomes approach model to language learning. In this regard OBE encourages educators and learners to focus on outcomes that have real-life application (Pretorius 1998:5).
- To have compulsory schooling with learners who range from six years

in Grade R to eighteen years in Grade nine. Fundamental knowledge and skills are to be developed gradually, grade by grade in the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phases (DoE 2001c:4).

- The right of an individual to choose which language or languages to study and to use as a language of learning (Heugh *et al.* 1995:73).

The previous education system did not have outcomes as its focus or the application of skills in the real world. Pretorius (1998:viii) maintains that the educationists encountered some problems with the traditional model in South Africa. The curriculum was too structured, prescriptive and not easily adaptable, with little room for educational initiative. The accent fell on academic education, while education on skills remained behind. A large gap existed between education in the formal educational sectors and training by employers. The curriculum was content-based and educator-centred. At present, the Constitution and Bill of Rights put emphasis on human rights values (DoE 2001c:11). The learner that is anticipated must have acquired not only knowledge, but also skills to apply the acquired knowledge in order to be effective. The communicative approach in ESL teaching and learning can pave the way to realise this applications of acquired knowledge. The use of the communicative approach would mould learners in terms of communication skills as a human resource so that learners are able to compete effectively in the world of communication.

According to Kramer (1999:v,1), the change to OBE was not only needed to heal the crippled education system, but also to catch up simultaneously with the world. What underpins the success of OBE will be the way in which it is



implemented. Will it bring progress or disaster in education? If used properly, carefully and intelligently, OBE can result as very successful. If used ignorantly, naively and incorrectly, it would effect a tremendous amount of damage. OBE is an alternative exercise that is implemented by educators and curriculum developers, demanding a higher degree of responsibility, accountability and professionalism (Malan 1997:22).

### **3.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN OBE APPROACH**

Outcomes-based Education (OBE) was developed from the competency based learning model of William Spady, as well as mastery learning. Competency based learning aims to prepare learners for success in fulfilling various life roles. Mastery learning focuses on the need to create favourable learning conditions as regards time, teaching strategies and learning success (Kramer 1999:3,4). To define mastery, educators prepare a set of objectives and a final (summative) examination. Level of mastery is established as learners perform certain instructions. The educator break learning into units mapped against the learning objectives (Schunk 1991:310).

Spady and Schlebusch (1999:26) assert that the essence of implementing an OBE approach lies with this notion: "Start with the learning outcome clearly in mind, and instruct from there". This signifies that the educator needs to have a clear picture or description of what the learner needs to master at the end of learning. The educator enhances learning by designing a curriculum, instructional approach and assessment to match the description. Simultaneously, learners need to know from the beginning what that clear

description is all about so that they develop an understanding of what is expected and where the learning path is headed.

Malan (1997:74) contends that human life is more than the performance of specific activities. Education should therefore be more than a process which prepares learners definitely and adequately for such activities. The OBE approach is the way in which the roots of the traditional education are obliterated, and the new approach to learning emerges. The re-birth of education aims to place the standard of South African education at a high level compared to the rest of the international world.

OBE is an approach that is embedded on the principle of learning which resembles the achievement of outcomes. In an OBE approach, outcomes represents a culminating demonstration which is the result of meaningful learning in various contexts (Pretorius and Lemmer 1998:2). Learners become involved in the demonstration of, for example communicative tasks or task-based activities in an ESL classroom. These demonstrations are then assessed by means of Critical and Specific Outcomes, depending on the context of the learning programme involved (Kramer 1999:131). Learning becomes a success depending on the outcomes that are set out in the curriculum.

### **3.4 AN OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM 2005**

C2005, commonly known “Curriculum 2005” is a unique version of a new educational framework in South Africa. It’s a catchy name connected to the

date by which the new system should be set up in schools (Spady and Schlebusch 1999:54). It is a programme with pre-planned past and present experiences that learners should know (Lubisi *et al.* 1997:62).

C2005 aims to reform the previous traditional education, so that the spirit of lifelong learning that was anticipated transcends. The implementation of C2005 in 1998 is the contemplated development that brings about the culmination of various revitalisation attempts on the South African education (Pretorius 1998:v). The first attempt begins with the implementation of the C2005 in the Foundation Phase (Grade one) and the Intermediate Phase (Grade four). C2005 advances to the next grades yearly until learners attain the GETC at the end of the Senior Phase (Grade nine).

In the Senior Phase, C2005 comprises eight Learning Areas as was briefly mentioned in Chapter 1. Each Learning Area has its own set of Specific Outcomes that are to be achieved at the end of the GETC band. For example, LLC is a Learning Area for languages and its seven Specific Outcomes project the character of languages (Kramer 1999:136). Added to these Specific Outcomes are twelve Critical Outcomes (general for all Learning Areas). These Critical Outcomes are seen as cross field/generic outcomes. This means that all the Learning Areas will also aim to realise these outcomes. These outcomes will be discussed in more detail under 3.5.

The Learning Areas are domains through which learners experience a balanced curriculum (Mothata *et al.* 2000:95). Learning programmes are sets of activities that happen within the Learning Area, and have certain learning outcomes that are to be achieved in activities under certain themes,



called Programme Organisers. The Senior Phase in GET consists of eight Learning Areas, namely Arts and Culture (AC); Economic and Management Sciences (EMS); Human and Social Sciences (HSS); Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC); Life Orientation (LO); Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences (MLMMS); Natural Sciences (NS); and Technology (TECH).

The Learning Area that this study will concentrate on is LLC. In LLC, the eleven official languages receive statuses of becoming subjects. ESL is one of the languages entertained under LLC (DoE 1998:5).

### **3.5 OUTCOMES IN LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION**

According to Malan (1997:10), the process of teaching and learning is outcomes-based when it accepts as its premise that the definition of outcomes should form the basis of all educational activity. This includes among others, the development of curricula and the assessment of learners. The learning area LLC devotes teaching and learning to the achievement of the Critical and Specific Outcomes.

Mothata *et al.* (2000:38;164) emphasise that Specific Outcomes are achievements that learners demonstrate in a specific context, in a particular area of learning and at a specific level. These specific knowledge, attitudes and understanding should be displayed in a particular context. The Critical Outcomes are generic, cross-curricular, broad outcomes that are applied in

all Learning Areas. They focus on the capacity to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an integrated way. Kramer (1999:135) states that each Learning Area stands on the foundation of the Critical Outcomes.

Critical Outcomes are the basic foundation which the learners have to show at the end of learning. In conjunction with the Specific Outcomes, the learner aims to realise the twelve Critical Outcomes. The Specific Outcomes remain the building blocks that construct the content of ESL learning. These two types of outcomes are achieved differently in ESL learning. The Critical Outcomes are general intended results, and the Specific Outcomes focus on a particular section in ESL learning. The Critical Outcomes are set to enhance the learners abilities in achieving the Specific Outcomes (Spady 1994:1,2).

### **3.5.1 Definition of an outcome**

The Board of Studies (1991:5) around curriculum outcomes, defines outcomes as the intended results of teaching and learning. Outcomes are expressed as a set of broad, comprehensive indicators of the learners' achievement. Attitudes, knowledge, skills and values encompass the end products of achievement in the outcome of any Learning Area (Brady 1997:86). Learners should not only demonstrate knowledge, but must also show that they have attained certain attitudes, values and skills. An instructional objective is a desired outcome of learning that is expressed in terms of observable performance of the learners' new or existing behaviours (Montague 1987:3).

Figure 5 shows the outlines of how the twelve Critical Outcomes form the basis of all Learning Areas, also LLC. It further shows how the seven Specific Outcomes are built on the achievement of this Critical Outcomes.

LLC		Specific Outcome 7				
LLC		Specific Outcome 6				
LLC		Specific Outcome 5				
LLC		Specific Outcome 4				
LLC		Specific Outcome 3				
LLC		Specific Outcome 2				
LLC		Specific Outcome 1				
CRITICAL OUTCOME 1	CRITICAL OUTCOME 2	CRITICAL OUTCOME 3	CRITICAL OUTCOME 4	CRITICAL OUTCOME 5	CRITICAL OUTCOME 6	CRITICAL OUTCOME 7
SEVEN + FIVE CRITICAL OUTCOMES						
GENERAL FOR ALL THE LEARNING AREAS						
CRITICAL OUTCOME 8	CRITICAL OUTCOME 9	CRITICAL OUTCOME 10	CRITICAL OUTCOME 11	CRITICAL OUTCOME 12		

**Figure 5: Outcomes' column for LLC**  
(adapted from Kramer 1999:134,135)



### 3.5.2 Critical Outcomes

The Critical Outcomes organise, emphasise and guide every activity in a Learning Area. Every Learning Area is organised with Programme Organisers that would eventually, at the end of the learning process, aim to instill competency in every learner.

Spady and Schlebusch (1999:60) list the Critical Outcomes as follows:

According to Kramer (1999:133), the first seven are the Critical Outcomes that have been prescribed by SAQA. They are the basis for all education and training. They require that learners should be able to:

- Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made.
- Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation, community.
- Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
- Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
- Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

A further five enabling outcomes that assist learners to achieve the first seven Critical Outcomes. Learners need to show that they can:

- Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
- Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities.
- Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
- Explore education and career opportunities, and
- Develop entrepreneurial opportunities.

### **3.5.3 Specific Outcomes**

Olivier (1998:17) states that the Specific Outcomes are context linked in such a way that they support the Critical Outcomes by means of expressing the expected results that characterise the Critical Outcomes. According to Botha, Dichmont and Rule (2000:xiii), the Specific Outcomes for the Learning Area: LLC, Senior Phase are as follows:

- Specific Outcome 1: Learners make and negotiate meaning and understanding;

- Specific Outcome 2: Learners show critical awareness of language usage;
- Specific Outcome 3: Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts;
- Specific Outcome 4: Learners access, process and use information from a variety of sources and situations;
- Specific Outcome 5: Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context;
- Specific Outcome 6: Learners use language for learning; and
- Specific Outcome 7: Learners use appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations.

All outcomes are integrated into the learning programme.

### **3.5.4 Learning programme**

According to Mothata *et al.* (2000:96), a learning programme is a set of learning and teaching activities. The learning programme further shows the ways in which to assess learners' achievement. Learners' achievement is measured by the notional time covered for the entire learning programme. The notional time is the informed and estimated time that an average learner,



entering with the correct level of assumed knowledge, would take to master the Specific Outcomes of a unit standard. Schunk (1991:309) contends that the degree of learning is influenced by the amount of time that is spent and time needed to accomplish the required learning material. In Carrolls' time model, "time" means academically engaged time, that is, time spent paying attention and trying to learn (Schunk 1991:308).

The South African Qualifications Authority (1997:10), refers to "time" as the time period spent on a learning programme, which includes the time spent on doing assignments, home study, preparation – and not only the time spent on direct tuition (contact time). Pretorius (1998:40) also affirms that all the efforts that educators and learners make during the learning programme, constitute the actual notional learning time.

Figure 6 (page 66) focuses on the relation of LLC towards other Learning Areas in terms of notional time. The three phases that constitute the GETC band, namely the Foundation Phase (from Grades R to three), the Intermediate Phase (from Grades four to six), and the Senior Phase (from Grades seven to nine) are included.

As is evident from Figure 6, the notional time of the respective Learning Areas per phase differs. The notional time of Literacy and LLC in the different phases also differs. Less notional time is available in the Senior Phase for LLC. The notional time allocated for LLC in the Senior Phase is 20% and should therefore be used effectively, especially in an ESL learning programme.

<i>FOUNDATION PHASE</i>				
<b>LEARNING PROGRAMME:</b>	Literacy	Numeracy	Life Skills	<b>FLEXI TIME</b>
<b>NOTIONAL TIME:</b>	25%	25%	25%	25%

<i>INTERMEDIATE PHASE</i>		<i>SENIOR PHASE</i>	
<b>LEARNING PROGRAMME:</b>	<b>NOTIONAL TIME:</b>	<b>LEARNING PROGRAMME:</b>	<b>NOTIONAL TIME:</b>
Language, Literacy & Communication	35%	Language, Literacy & Communication	20%
Mathematical Literacy,	15%	Mathematical Literacy,	13%
Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences		Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences	
Natural Sciences and Technology	15%	Natural Sciences and Technology	12%
Human, Social, Economic and Management Sciences	15%	Human and Social Sciences	10%
Arts, Culture and Life Orientation	15%	Economic and Management Sciences	10%
<b>FLEXI TIME</b>	5%	Arts and Culture	10%
		Life Orientation	10%
		<b>FLEXI TIME</b>	5%

**Figure 6: Notional Time for each Learning Area**  
(DoE 1997a:23; DoE 1997b:28; DoE 1997c:28)

#### 3.5.4.1 ESL learning programme

In order to develop a learning programme, educators have to take note of the following steps (DoE 2001b:30):

- Step 1: Decide on the goal(s) of the learning programme.
- Step 2: Select and organise learning outcomes and associated assessment standards (i.e. knowledge, skills, values) as outlined in the Learning Area statements into a series of activities that last the set period of time.
- Step 3: Identify and select appropriate resources.
- Step 4: Identify appropriate assessment strategies that make provision for different aspects of learners' needs and abilities.

(the success of the learning programme, depends on the phase organisers)

The five phase organisers in the Senior Phase include communication, culture and society, environment, economy and development, and personal development. The phase organisers reflect key aspects of the Critical Outcomes, the essence of what is currently considered important for the transformation and development of South Africa (Botha *et al.* 2000:xv). The inclusion of range statements, assessment criteria and performance indicators also play vital roles in a learning programme.

#### **3.5.4.2 Range statement**

The range statement is regarded as the tip or 'sky is the limit' that gives the scope of learning. Botha *et al.* (2000:xii) contend that the range statements define the assessment criteria by indicating the scope, depth and level of complexity learners must achieve within a particular phase. The information of the Specific Outcomes and the assessment criteria are



contained in the range statement. That is, the learner has to demonstrate the contexts of the Specific Outcome that needs to be assessed (Pretorius 1998:37).

#### **3.5.4.3 Assessment criteria**

Phillips (1997:35) is of the notion that assessment criteria is used to validate the required knowledge that, for example, the ESL learner has to communicate. ESL communication is the endpoint that the learner proves in order that the Specific Outcomes are achieved. Assessment criteria is usually prescriptive according to the level of each of the seven Specific Outcomes in ESL learning.

#### **3.5.4.4 Performance indicators**

Mothata *et al.* (2000:126) assert that the performance indicators are series of indicators which can be postulated (for example in ESL), in order to judge whether teaching and learning is effective. The performance indicators also indicate the amount and kind of evidence that would be required to show that the learner has achieved the outcome of learning. The learning programme is monitored through the use of performance indicators. The educator would assess the individual learners' competency in learning (as compared to the world outside), through the use of performance indicators as the basis that set the performance tasks. The standard of performances are

revealed by both educator and the learner from the use of learning support material (to be discussed later under 3.7.).

### **3.5.5 Achieving outcomes through the communicative approach**

In the achievement of ESL outcomes, the use of the communicative approach becomes a process that enfolds a balance on the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Olivier (1998:27) demonstrates the achievement of outcomes by using a triangle to balance knowledge, skills and the learning process.

The next three illustrations (Figures 7, 8 and 9: pages 71 to 73), show the various ways of achieving the ESL outcomes when the communicative approach is used in LLC. In order to achieve outcomes in ESL, educators must maintain a balance of three components, namely process (a), knowledge (b) and skills (c), as shown in Figure 7 (page 71). Teaching and learning (the process) should be a balance that includes what to teach (ESL knowledge) and how to teach (communicative skills). The three components (a, b and c) create a triangle that is “in tandem” (balanced). The triangle is a form of a round oval circle that becomes balanced, because of the skills (communicative) in which the educators pass knowledge (ESL) to learners. The learners then understand and process knowledge meaningfully.

The components of the triangle in LLC are always looking at equating the formation of the envisaged ESL outcome that is to be achieved. The equilibrium (balance) of teaching and learning in LLC is found in the

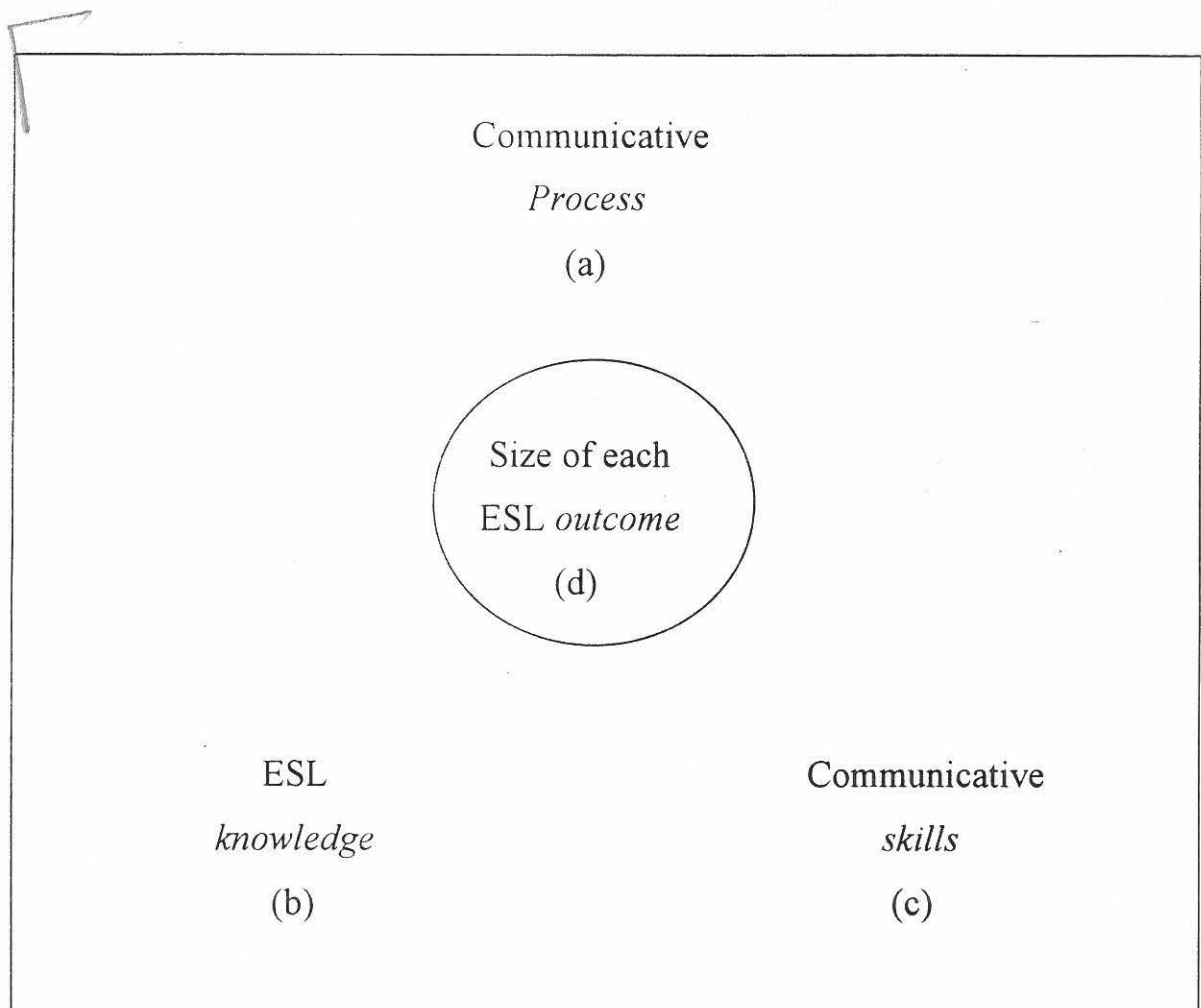
communication process through the use of ESL knowledge and effective communicative skills. The educator has to equate the ESL knowledge with the period (notional time) that has to be spent before the end of teaching and learning (process). What the educator imparts (the ESL knowledge) is far less important than how the knowledge is acquired (communicative skills). Learners should acquire knowledge which is meaningful so that the end products (the outcomes), are achieved.

Figure 8 (page 72) shows how the imbalance of the components of the triangle (a, b and c), results in the process where ESL outcomes are not achieved. This illustration represents the imbalance that would affect the attainment of ESL outcomes. The communicative process, should stay ovally (like a ball) within the triangle and not out-of-shape (like an egg). If it happens that the ball-like shape turns out-of-shape, it means that the learning and teaching strategies that are applied by the educators are ineffective. It can be due to the reason that too much emphasis is placed by the educator in providing knowledge than spending time on practising skills to the learners (Olivier 1998:28).

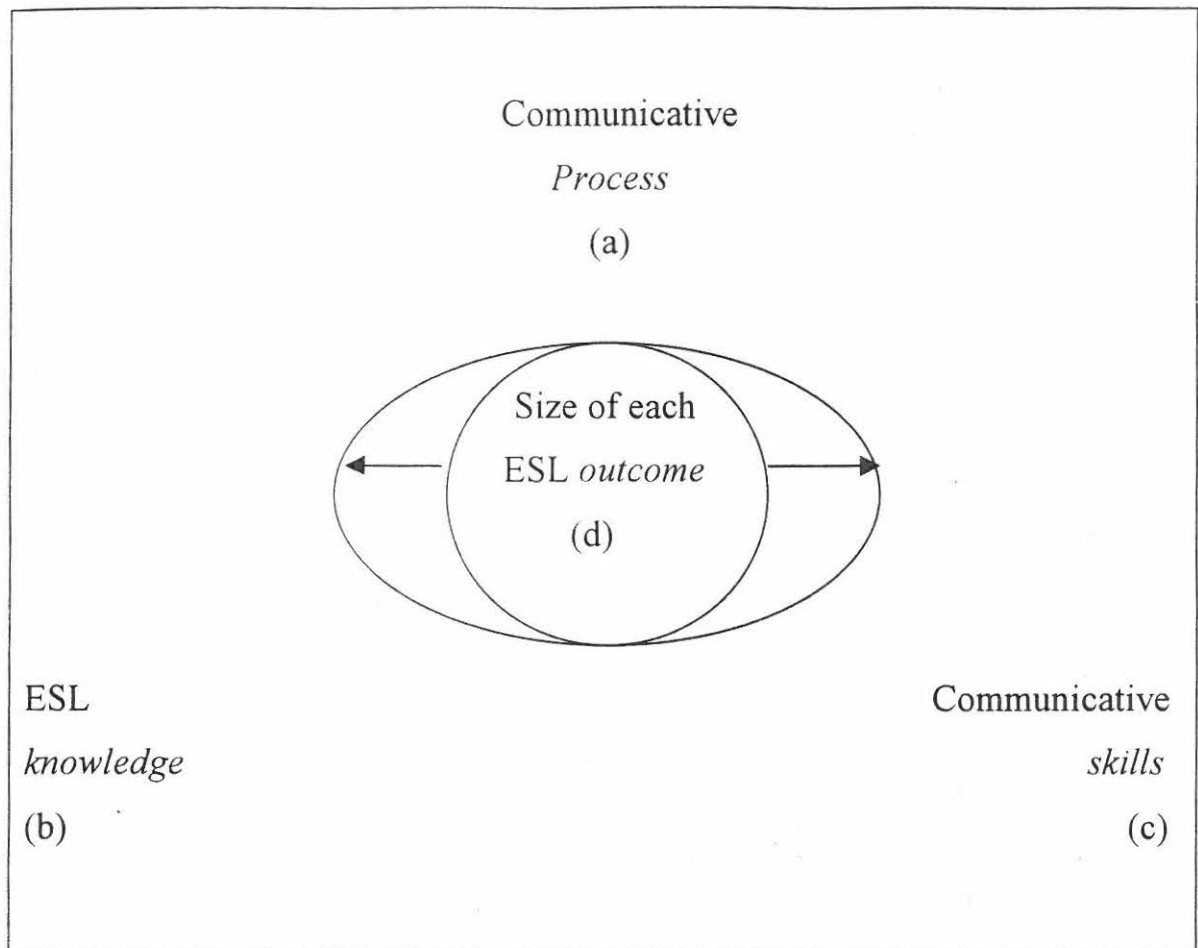
The third option of this “in tandem” triangle is where the communication process is enhanced by the educator so that learners obtain the opportunities to demonstrate the acquired knowledge and skills. The educator should intergrate various strategies in order to achieve the outcomes. The success (process) in the communicative approach depends mostly on how the educator enhances the knowledge with effective communicative skills in order that outcomes become achieved.



Facilitation of ESL with the use of the communicative approach would build the capacity of the learners by guiding them to achieve the outcomes. The educators' ability to facilitate ESL meaningfully takes place when the shape of a triangle stays oval. The shape only expands when the three components of the triangle increase. When the triangle expands, it means that the educators' communicative skills are effective.



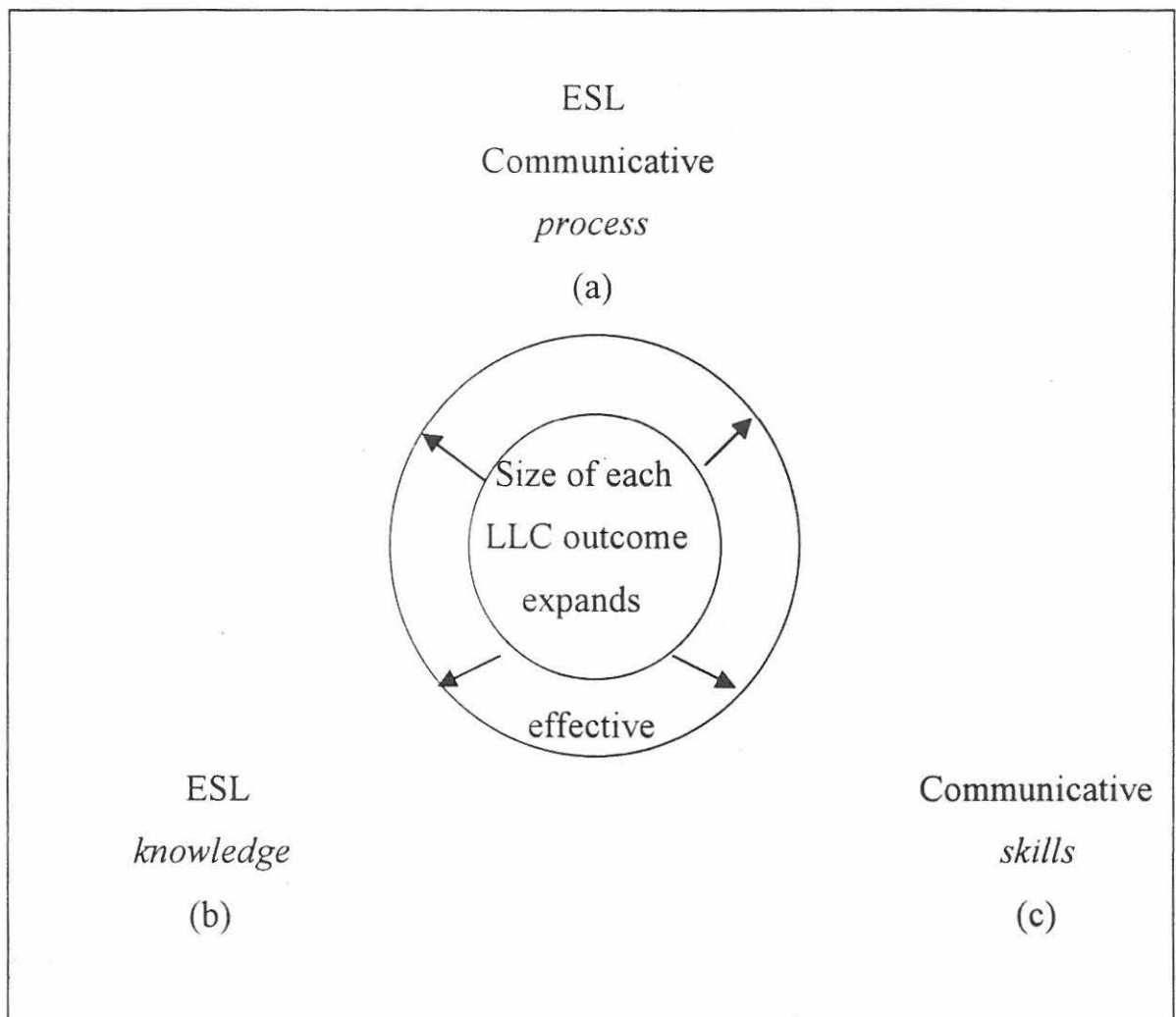
**Figure 7: A balanced "in tandem" triangle**  
(adapted from Olivier 1998:27)



**Figure 8: An imbalanced "in tandem" triangle**  
(adapted from Olivier 1998:28)

The next illustration (Figure 9, page 73) shows the successful use of communicative strategies. The balance of the "in tandem" expands the learners' communicative abilities. The educator as the facilitator must have the ability to create the opportunities for the learners to achieve the ESL outcomes.

In order to achieve outcomes in a second language, Beebe (1988:20-22), considers language acquisition as a process that entails latent psychological structures in learners that need to be activated. The educator needs to facilitate the encoding process in order for learners to acquire knowledge meaningfully. If knowledge is not encoded, it will remain vague to learners, no matter how much it is exposed.



**Figure 9: Expanding a balanced "in tandem" triangle**  
(adapted from Olivier 1998:27)



Knowledge needs to be internalised in accordance with the meaningful learning of a second language. Due to internalisation of knowledge, Corder (1967:161-170) directs the theory of second language acquisition on “transitional competence”. Learners develop the knowledge of second language from a dynamic state of flux, constantly changing as new knowledge of the second language is added. Piaget terms such transitions cognitive developments, as the earlier structures later changes by means of producing new structures at the levels higher and different from the previous ones (Zajda 1997:13,14). The “transitional competence” is experimented in the hypothesis testing by individual second language learners. The process entails the identification of the observed second language concepts (new knowledge). Learners then form hypotheses on the observed concepts. Later, the learners test the hypothesis by making utterances of the new concepts. Feedback is received from the tests done. Finally, in order to see whether the new concepts are internalised, the learners decide whether to accept or reject the hypothesis received.

In order to see the meaningfulness of the new second language knowledge, Ausubel (in Beebe 1988:24) emphasizes that meaningful learning requires the relating of new material to knowledge already acquired. The new second language knowledge that is acquired, has to relate to the already existing knowledge. The extension on the acquired knowledge is brought by the similarities between the old and new concepts in the second language.

The application of a second language by learners need communicative competence. In order to acquire the communicative competence in a second language, Beebe (1988:45-47) suggests that the proper functioning of the

second language would follow when speakers of a second language know the skills on how to use the language in sociolinguistically appropriate ways. The possibility of developing a language depends also on the teaching and learning strategies that the educator uses.

### **3.6 TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

Teaching and learning is enhanced when the learning programme has been successfully integrated with relevant strategies. Kramer (1999:91-99) maintains that teaching and learning involve the use of direct or indirect teaching (describes educator versus learner centred approach), independent or co-operative strategies (lies between independent and group strategies) and reception or discovery learning (lies between reception such as rote learning and discovery such as meaningful learning). Discovery learning refers to obtaining knowledge for oneself and promotes meaningful learning (Schunk 1991:299).

#### **3.6.1 Direct versus Indirect teaching**

According to Kramer (1999:91-99), teaching and learning strategies decide the approach that educators will take in managing the tasks that are performed by learners. In Table 5 (page 76), all the direct instruction strategies are educator-centred. The educator does not only provide all the knowledge, but directs what and how learning happens. The educator is in

full control of learning as the pace, style and atmosphere of the learning are directed by the educator.

STRATEGY	METHOD
Lectures	Educator presents talk with visual aids. Learners take notes.
Dictation	Educator reads or speaks. Learners write exactly what is said.
Presentation	Educator leads discussion with oral presentation, raising issues.
Drill & practice	Educator presents examples. Learners then do problem solving exercises.
Guided worksheets	Educator guides, class works through worksheets step by step.
Video, film, tape or radio presentations	Class views presentation, taking notes.
Didactic questioning	Educator leads learners using questions, moving from lower to higher order questions.
Demonstrations	Educator shows or illustrates skill or principles.
Guided writing, Reading or listening	Educator uses structured format to lead learners towards specific learning outcomes.
Team teaching	Educators work together, to illustrate debates, different perspectives or approaches to learners.
Visitor presentations	Presentations by visitors from World-of-Work, community, parents, ex-learners from the school, etc.

**Table 5: *The Direct Instruction Strategies***  
(Kramer 1999:93)

In Table 6 (page 77), the direction shifts and becomes Indirect Instruction - a learner-centred approach. Here the learners are active participants in the classroom. The educator acts as a facilitator, resource provider and manager of the learning process. Learners create their own understanding of concepts by analysing the evidence gathered through their performed tasks.



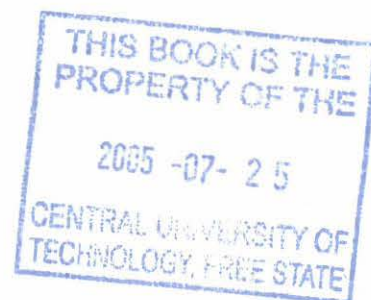
STRATEGY	METHOD
Oral presentations	Learners prepare a fixed time presentation for class.
Concept maps & Case studies	Learners create topic based mind maps Learners study a given real or fictitious situation in order to understand concepts, facts & principles.
Delivering lessons	Learners act as educators in planning & delivering a lesson
Theme posters & collages	Learners create an educational poster or collage to illustrate issues relating to the topic.
Role plays & Simulations	Learners prepare and simulate situations and characters.
Design and make activities	Learners plan and construct products or performances.
Group projects	Groups of learners collaborate on various projects.
Research articles	Learners use different research techniques to complete essays or original research presentations
Field trips & Site visits	Visits to authentic sites are used as a basis for learning topics/themes from the curriculum
Investigations & Experiments	Learners undertake discipline based procedures to learn principles and concepts (e.g. for science or other areas)
Debates	Learners research and build logical arguments to support a particular perspective in a debate
Interviews	Learners have the task of gathering data from other people and specialists on various topics.
Surveys or Draws	Learners gather data about topics in order to make predictions, conclusions.

**Table 6 : *The Indirect Instruction Strategy***

(Kramer 1999:95)

### 3.6.2 Independent or Co-operative strategy

Table 7 (page 78) shows Independent learning strategies where learners undertake the tasks by themselves. Learners use their own effort and rely on



themselves, however the educator still directs and helps learners if needed. The educator mediates and supports learners with unknown information.

STRATEGY	METHOD
Homework	Work outside of regular class or school time
Research projects	Information on a topic is collected, collated and presented independently for analysis in class.
Report projects	Projects done completely outside class. Includes purpose, definition of terms, data, analysis, references.
Interview tasks	Learners identify and conduct interviews with role models and present results in class
Assigned questions	Educator prepares questions that learner works through. Used to recall prior learning or to reinforce new learning.
Equipment assisted Learning	Learners use computers, scientific or other equipment for learning. Ensures individual practice of skills.
One-on-one debates	Learners prepare own notes before discussing with a partner.
Learning centres	Special space created in the classroom for learners to find and use resources for special tasks.
Writing assignments	Essays, paragraphs or sentences done individually.
Self assessment	Learners assess themselves and their own work using various techniques, guided by educator.
Worksheets	Learners work through at their own pace.
Crossword puzzles	Educators prepare crossword puzzles for learners to complete by researching answers from books or notes.

**Table 7: *The Independent strategies***  
**(Kramer 1999:96)**

Apart from individual learning strategies, OBE learning also involves co-operative groupwork. Through the Co-operative or Interactive learning strategies (Table 8, page 80), learners work together and help each other to achieve outcomes of the performed tasks.

### **3.6.3 Meaningful reception learning**

The theory of Ausubels' meaningful reception learning (in Schunk 1991:301), contends that the acquisition of knowledge is primarily the manifestation of reception learning. Learners are simply required to comprehend the material and to incorporate it into their cognitive structures so that it be available for reproduction, related learning, or problem solving in future. Meaningful learning refers to the learning of ideas, concepts, and principles by relating new information to knowledge in the memory.

Kramer (1999:100) describes Ausubels' model as a composition of two continua. The first continuum is between rote learning (learning by memorising something without any understanding of what is learned, has little value) and meaningful learning (having deep comprehension of what is learned). The second continuum describes the extent to which learners are either taught directly or are required to discover learning for themselves. Through the reception learning the educator transmits and learners receive knowledge. The learners also discover learning through guidance from the educator or individually through independent discovery (Kramer 1999:101).



STRATEGY	METHOD
Group assignments	Learners complete projects in groups, with different tasks given to each member. Each person contributes towards the final product. Eg. Producing a class magazine.
Simulations & role playing	Each group member assume the role of a character and play that role in addressing an issue. Eg. Deciding on an anti-smoke law. (Roles: doctor, smoker, tobacco merchant, politician, cigarette factory worker.)
Brainstorming	Learners generate different ideas to solve problems or for discussion on a topic.
Jigsaws	Each learner belongs to a "home" team and an "expert" team. The "home" teams are briefed on the topic and decide on important questions. Learners then join their "expert" team. Each "expert" team discusses a sub-topic in depth and the members take notes. The sub-topic is an issue, idea, question or theme related to the main topic. Each learner then returns to his or her "home" team. Each member then shares with the whole group what s/he has discussed in his or her "expert" teams. The "home" group then completes the work.
Peer teaching	Members of "expert" groups learn and become competent in a new skill or knowledge. They then return and teach this to their "home" group members.
Team presentations	Group members prepare individual contributions to a joint presentation on a topic. Members work independently, in class or at home, before convening to work together.
Fishbowls	One group sits in a circle facing each other to discuss one issue related to a topic. The rest of the class sits in an outer circle, taking notes and watching. Different groups discuss different issues in turn. Members then return to a "home" group to write up their report.
Round Table (written) or Round Robin (oral)	Groups use a single pen and piece of paper to answer a question. Each member writes down one line before passing the paper and pen to the next member, who writes the next line and passes it on. Learners may pass without writing.
Buddy System	Learners are assigned a partner to discuss issues with. Partners discuss questions or check each others' work or share ideas. The buddies need not work on the same questions.
Peer Assessment	Learners are divided into groups or pairs to assess each others' work prior to handing in to the educator.
Train questions	Groups sit in lines, one member behind the other. The educator or other groups pose questions. The first member answers or passes it on to the next person. If the question reaches the end of the line without being answered, the team loses a point.
Telstar techniques	Each group elects a spokesperson to address the issue. All spokespersons sit in an inner circle to debate. Members of the groups may pass notes, suggestions or ideas on to the spokesperson from outside of the circle.

**Table 8: *The Co-operative or group learning strategies***  
**(Kramer 1999:99)**

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### **3.7 LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIAL**

The use of the learning support material (LSM) in ESL has to be shifted to the learning values of the generic outcomes underlying OBE (DoE 1997a & DoE 1997b). The use of OBE resources or the usual LSM, meet the outcomes in the sense that what is learned inside the learning material (that is the content-knowledge), helps an individual learner to cope/solve problems in the outside world. The content-knowledge does not become a problem which a learner insists to know, but a remedy that makes the learner to be proactive in real life.

For instance, in the communication of stories the learners respond to the feelings of writers and the people they create, write, talk, or argue about. Learners pick up facts and details in order to enrich themselves socially and culturally (Scheffler 2001:3). However, there should be a choice in the use of relevant learning materials. Not every LSM is relevant for all tasks.

#### **3.7.1 The types of learning support material**

Kasambira (1997:87,98) asserts that the vitality of using learning support material (LSM) is that they give variety in lesson presentations and avoid boredom among learners. When LSM is in use, both the content and presentation of the lesson should be as dramatic as possible. The LSM that is used in ESL should be as such as to enhance OBE. In an OBE approach, learning materials develop and facilitate effective communication strategies.

The same applies with LSM, the outcomes direct the educator and learners at using the essence of what is prescribed in the learning programmes of ESL. According to Scheffler (2001:4), support materials such as print material, electronic material, physical or kinaesthetic material and human involvement, enable learners to create opportunities to understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.

Choosing Specific Outcome 5 of LLC as an example:

Specific Outcome 5: Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.

LSM that can be used in achieving this Specific Outcome may be:

- print , for example: textbooks, handouts, worksheets, charts, posters, reading books, magazines and newspapers.
- electronic, for example: computer, television, e-mail, the internet, radio and the overhead projector.
- physical/kinaesthetic, for example: movements/demonstrations, games and playing dramas and role-plays.
- human and organisational, community involvement in learning through individual speakers, charity organisations, church groups, choirs, idols such celebrities, professionals, ex-learners, politicians and role models.



Pretorius (1998:77,80) emphasises that LSM is in fact not limited to what can be fitted in the class. Every possible object inside and outside the class, can serve a purpose in learning. That is, the playing-grounds outside (could be used for activities where learners exchange ideas through game-plays); various materials lying in the rubbish bins (learners could be given a topic on naming and collecting the objects which have a possibility to undergo a recycling process); old furniture that are not in use and stored (sometimes drama activities need unused furniture for certain topics); the library (learners loan books from the library searching for certain topics); possible objects and spaces (illustration and identification of objects and places are to be done before dramatisation); in fact, the list is endless. Both the educator and learners need not necessarily buy LSM. Creativity can be exercised in searching for useful LSM.

Van der Horst and McDonald's (1997:161) principles in generating creativity of LSM would guide ESL educators in effecting every learning programme with the following questions:

- Do the specific LSM support real learning in ESL?
- Do the specific LSM help the particular learner to attain the desired outcomes of ESL?

### **3.7.2 The guiding principles in the development of LSM**

The development and use of LSM should be guided by the outcomes that are to be achieved. For an example: in order to achieve Specific Outcome 5:

Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.

The educator or learners can bring to the classroom certain recycled-objects in order to facilitate and effect essay-writing on the performance task: “recycling objects”. The recycled-objects evoke creativity and ideas in the learners, such that the knowledge on “what objects are to be included in the course of the essay” could be constructed.

In relation to languages, Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:161) state the guiding principles in the development of LSM as follows:

- LSM should be user-friendly and educator-friendly. A language laboratory which neither the educator nor learners can operate is not a user-friendly environment.
- LSM should be learner-centred. LSM must invite learners into a dialogue. For example, texts (both print-based and electronic) must be invitational, asking questions such as: What do you think? or What is your opinion? Learners must feel that they are part of the construction of knowledge.
- LSM should be affordable. The state cannot afford to equip every learner with a computer and on-line link. Thus, where local communities cannot afford this technology, the educator will have to plan teaching with the use of available and affordable LSM. The educator and learners should improvise LSM.

- LSM should not contain any bias. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996a:7) and the South African Schools Act (1996b:10) forbid discrimination on various grounds, such as language, sex, race or gender. For instance, LSM which do not acknowledge the role of females are unacceptable. LSM should be accessible for use by all learners. The educator should not use LSM that may injure learners emotionally or loose the learners' dignity.
- As far as possible, LSM should be integrative, holistic and cross-curricular. A central tenet of OBE is that life cannot be divided into disciplines. Materials in teaching and learning should reflect the educators' and learners' capabilities by means of an inter-disciplinary approach as far as possible.

If relevant LSM is used pertinent to specific activities, then learners will be able to carry out the capability tasks efficiently and with less hassles.

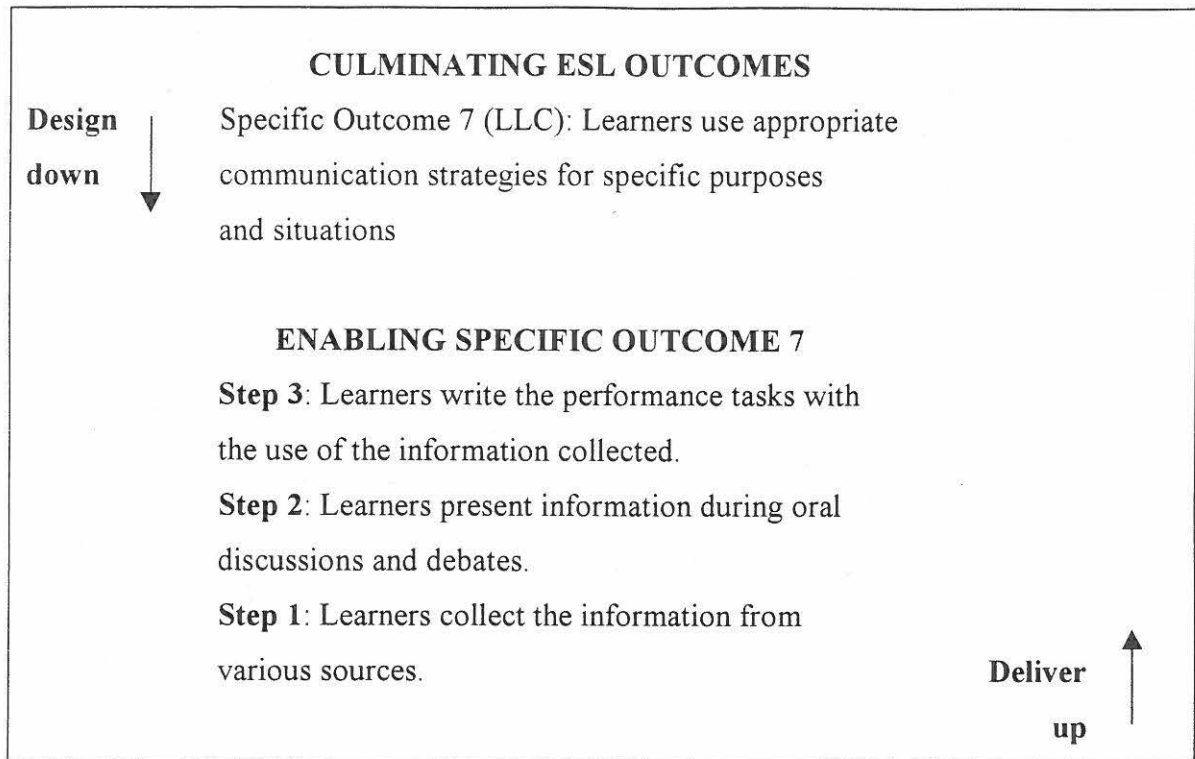
### **3.8 CAPABILITY TASKS**

According to Pretorius (1998:102), capability tasks have to show the spirit of "what is to be designed-down, is delivered-up". In Figure 10 (page 87), what the learners acquire in the performance tasks of ESL, should reflect on what the learners are supposed to achieve in the outcomes. Learners are assessed on the demonstrated ESL knowledge. The learners' credits for units of learning define a genuine capability (HSRC 1995:15).



All learners have different attitudes to ESL learning, because of different learning styles. Regarding the design-down, deliver-up way of achieving outcomes in ESL, Kramer (1999:26) asserts that with regards to OBE, there is a need to clarify the essence of the outcome first. For example, the achievement of Specific Outcome 7: Learners use appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations (Figure 10, page 87), centres learning around the use of appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations. Scheffler (2001:5) comments that communication strategies are indicated when there is collection of information from various sources, such as books and people, the presentation of information during discussions or debates, and the performance of tasks written by making use of the information that was collected from various sources.

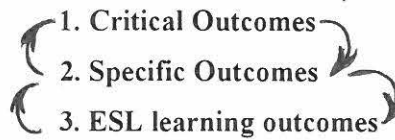
Learners would indicate the communication strategies that were taken step by step, starting from where the learners know where to get information from, up to the stage where the learners communicate the information. Through the guidance of the Critical Outcomes, Specific Outcomes, range statements, assessment criteria, performance indicators and the notional time, the ESL learners would aim to communicate competently. Competency in activities leads to the learners' ability in developing the actual capabilities. The capability tasks are the end products that make learners to fulfil life-roles as communicators, entrepreneurs and problem-solvers. Through outcomes, learners show the rationale for ESL learning (Scheffler 2001:6).



**Figure 10: Culminating the ESL outcomes**  
(adapted from Kramer 1999:27)

In Figure 11 (page 88), the Critical Outcomes are what learners intend to show at the end of the learning process. Critical Outcomes are designed first, then the Specific Outcomes follow the specific Learning Area. When a learning programme is designed in a Learning Area, such a learning programme will contain a number of learning outcomes. Each learning programme in ESL will therefore have certain ESL learning outcomes. That forms the design-down aspect of planning. In the ESL classroom the educator will aim to realize the ESL learning outcomes, which will in turn realize the Specific Outcomes. The end result should be the realization of the Critical Outcomes. This is then the deliver-up aspect of learning.

THE DESIGN DOWN AND DELIVER UP  
ESL LEARNING



**Figure 11: *The design-down and deliver-up model***  
(adapted from Fitzpatrick 1991:20; Fitzpatrick 1994:21;  
Kudlas 1994:32-33; Spady and Marshall 1991:70)

### 3.9 ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES

In OBE, assessment implies a continuous judgement by the educator, learners and parents on the learners' progress (Scottish Office Education Department 1991:1). This can be termed continuous assessment (CASS). Educational policies have moved from measuring educational outcomes by years of schooling to emphasizing quality of schooling. Quality in schools should be judged in terms of what learners are able to do and whether this meets society's needs. In the classroom, learners are instructed to perform certain activities by means of explanations and discussions. At home, parents become references in the accumulation of the required knowledge. Back at school, the educator do assessment on the activities which are done by learners. Eventually, all the activities repeat the same procedures so that learners could achieve the set outcomes. The learners' performances in various activities are assessed by means of the achieved outcomes. Assessment in OBE looks at the attainment of outcomes continuously for a



period of time (CASS), and not only during a test or examination. There is a shift from a content-based-measurement, to a more performance-based-assessment.

In Table 9 (page 90) the shift from content measurement to performance assessment for ESL indicates the learners' continuous progress in performing the tasks. Learners could show the behaviours by means of exercises (individual or group). The attainment of outcomes would force learners to seek more information (knowledge) from other books, other learners, parents or any other resources (specifically in the community, outside the classroom). The resources would need to offer understanding (cognition) to learners in order to apply the information (knowledge). The information needs to be authentic and meaningful so that it can be collaborated in life. Learners should not be assessed on the ESL content only, but simultaneously on using the skills in performing the tasks. However, the assessment of tasks should become a continuous process, by means of summative and formative assessment procedures.

Scheffler (2001:26) and Pretorius (1998:83-85) view summative assessment as specific activities that provide the educator, learners, parents and Department of Education with information on continuous achievements of learners. Summative assessment is the sum of the whole continuous achievement of learners in various tasks. The different tasks such as oral presentations, writing activities and knowledge tests, are added in order to assess the level of achievement of the learners. The formative assessments provide and guide the educator with information on the individual's learning from day to day.

CONTENT MEASUREMENT	PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
<p><i>Behavioural approach to learning and assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accumulation of isolated facts and skills.</li> <li>- Assessment activity separate from instruction.</li> <li>- Assessment of discrete, isolated knowledge and skills.</li> </ul> <p><i>Paper-pencil assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Textbook-based knowledge.</li> <li>- Academic exercises.</li> <li>- Implicit criteria.</li> </ul> <p><i>Single occasion assessment</i> <i>Single attribute assessments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Isolated knowledge or discrete skills.</li> </ul> <p><i>Major emphasis on individual:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learners assessed individually with much secrecy surrounding tests.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Cognitive approach to learning and assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application and use of knowledge.</li> <li>- Assessment intergrated with teaching and learning.</li> <li>- Integrated and cross-disciplinary assessment.</li> </ul> <p><i>Authentic assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of knowledge in real-life contexts.</li> <li>- Meaningful tasks.</li> <li>- Public criteria for assessment.</li> </ul> <p><i>Portfolios samples over time</i> <i>Multi-dimensional assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge, abilities, thinking processes, metacognition and affect.</li> </ul> <p><i>Group assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative learning and products.</li> </ul>

**Table 9: *The shift from content measurement to performance assessment***  
**(Herman, Aschbacher and Winters 1992:13)**

Figure 12 (page 92) shows how the individual learner progresses in ESL teaching. The learner is rated according to a certain level of achievement for a performed task.

Competency levels (that is B, A, P and N) are used to express the performance of the learner when assessment tools (assessment criteria) are used. Competency levels refer to the following:

- B, level 4, beyond achievement or excellent,  
(that is from 70% up to 100%);
- A, level 3, achieved or good,  
(that is from 50% up to 69%);
- P, level 2, below achievement or fair,  
(that is from 40% and 49%); and
- N, level 1, not achieved or poor,  
(that is from 1% up to 39%).

In Figure 12, the learner has performed above what is expected for the writing activities, and level B signifies the level of achievement. The learner seems also to be good at viewing and listening activities in a language. The learner achieved level A after the viewing and listening activities. However, the learner struggles in reading and speaking activities. In reading, the performance is below what was expected. The learner achieved level P. With regards to speaking, the learner has shown no efforts, and thus performance was regarded as N (to denote not achieved). Educators use various assessment methods in ESL learning.



Levels:	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Viewing</i>	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>
<b>B:</b>		*			
<b>A:</b>			*		*
<b>P:</b>	*				
<b>N:</b>				*	

**Figure 12: *The levels of achievement and proficiency maps***  
(adapted from Masters and Forster 1996:7)

### 3.9.1 Assessment methods

According to the Department of Education (1997d:29-34), the continuous formative assessment progression-map includes:

- portfolio assessment (the learners' working materials where the completed work is kept);
- performance assessment (the manner/behaviour and the approach that effect the tasks);
- projects (the work developed and completed by learners, mostly after a long period);

- 
- product assessment (the work done and completed in class in a short period);
  - paper and pen assessment (the writing tasks such as classwork, tests, written-assignment and examinations);
  - observation assessment (the oral presentations and visual presentations done in class under the supervision of the educator);
  - journal (the learner's own notes, and collected notes);
  - assessment of prior learning (the questions answered which are based on the previous knowledge);
  - diagnostic assessment (the learner's behavioural and psychological performances);
  - self assessment (the checklists used by the individual learners); and
  - peer assessment (the checklists that are used by members in the same or other groups to assess other members).

Every assessment is applied pertaining to certain principles which enhance the effectiveness of the method in use.

### **3.9.2 The principles for effective and informative assessment**

Effective and informative assessment in ESL should form part of the principles dealing with assessment. The assessment principles have/are (DoE 1997d:43-47):

- relevancy to the curriculum;
- integration of teaching and learning;

- balanced, comprehensive and varied;
- valid and reliable;
- fairness;
- learners' engagement;
- value educator judgement;
- time-efficient and manageable;
- recognition of individual achievement and progress;
- a whole school approach;
- actively involving the parents; and
- conveying meaningful and useful information.

Every activity that is assessed, has some of these specific requirements for that particular activity. In short, an assessment tool is designed on the basis of these specific requirements for a particular activity.

### **3.9.3 Assessment tools**

ESL assessment tools are vital instruments to be used in assessing language skills when involving individuals, pairs and groups (Free State Education Institute 2000:3).

OBE assessment tools vary depending on the ESL strategies which are used. ESL assessment tools includes rubrics, checklists or tests. Traditionally, tests and examinations were used as common forms of summative assessment. In OBE, a rubric is preferred to be used as an assessment tool that would describe a continuum of performance quality that rates the learners'



performance from poor to excellent. Rubrics are designed in different forms such as assessment grids with marks only or tables that show sequence of performances. The design formats of rubrics depend on the individual educator. In Figure 13, for example, the ESL educator can assess a written task such as a letter on the basis of the quality of the task that is performed by the learners.

**Assessment Task:** *The school governing body is soon to decide whether to do away with the wearing of school uniforms. Write a letter to the principal of the school to put your point of view and to convince him/her of your argument.*

**Guidelines for assessment:**

<b><i>Excellent (B):</i></b>	Well structured response; evidence of planning; Strong introduction and conclusion; logic; technically no errors in spelling, grammar or use of vocabulary.
<b><i>Good (A):</i></b>	Reasons elaborated in detail; evidence of planning; good introduction and conclusion; logic; technically competent on spelling, grammar or use of vocabulary.
<b><i>Acceptable (P):</i></b>	Reasons; some evidence of planning; acceptable introduction and conclusion; clarity of ideas; technically acceptable spelling, grammar and use of vocabulary.
<b><i>Unacceptable (N):</i></b>	Unstructured; no reasons; inadequate organisation and planning; confusing; technically inadequate spelling, grammar or use of vocabulary.

**Figure 13: A rubric for written tasks**  
(adapted from Kramer 1999:63)

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### 3.10 CONCLUSION

All continuous assessment (CASS) progress reports for ESL depend on the effective and informative assessment methods that are used by the individual educators. Progress reports consist of the educators' documentation about the learner's performance, given to the parents and learners. The reports reflect the progress of the learner by commenting on the learners' strengths and weaknesses and on the skills and values that the learner has or has not demonstrated (Le Grange and Reddy 1998:38). Recording of the individual learner's progress should be done so that the learner could know the quality of his/her learning. The quality of effective teaching is enhanced by means of the communicative approach, by practically encouraging the learner to effect the communicative skills with the strategies that would advance the learner by becoming communicative competent. The communicative approach is an ideal method that the ESL educator should use in order to make learning in the classroom to become meaningful to learners.

Finally, ESL teaching and learning become facilitated meaningfully due to the flexibility in the use of the communicative approach. The educator integrates OBE in the activities and learners demonstrate the acquired knowledge in activities willingly. Every user of ESL becomes proactive and not reactive in demonstrating the innermost feelings on the learning area ESL, through the use of effective teaching and learning strategies in and outside the class situation.

Chapter 4 deals with research design, data collection, reporting and analysis.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION, REPORTING AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter two outlined ESL teaching and learning and Chapter three gave a theory on how OBE and the different teaching strategies can be applied in ESL learning, in order to maintain the goals of the communicative approach. In addition to goals, learning is also influenced by learning environment (Jacobsen *et al.* 1999:13). The reflections in ESL teaching are discussed with consideration to the experiences of educational, social and psychological factors that affect ESL learning. Communities create factors that affect learning such as the events that learners associate themselves with, and these factors form part of the learners' development. Learners develop into who they are educationally, socially and psychologically in consideration of these factors. All these factors form part of the learners' experiences. In classes learners use the communicative skills in teaching and learning in accordance with the past experiences that have formed their ESL knowledge.

This research study is designed to make an enquiry into the teaching and learning experiences of the ESL educators and learners in Grade eight.



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## 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Simons and Usher (2000:152) assert that a research design encompasses all the structural aspects of a study. A plan for selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer the research questions (McMillan and Schumacher 1997:162). Hence, the qualitative research design has been used in this study, to explain the actual events surrounding ESL teaching and learning in Grade eight.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:216) maintain that the qualitative research also enables the researcher to explicate, describe and explain the lived experiences according to the perspectives of the subjects. The researcher captures and brings together the educators' and learners' individual experiences, such as the language discourses based on their everyday interaction (Akindele 1996:39). In that way, the validity of information remains credible and reliable. The information can be generalized to the whole population of schools, as the methods that were used have ensured integrity and accuracy of the findings. *diversity - symbolic*

Five schools were selected in this ethnographic research. Thomas (1998:10) asserts that ethnography entails data-gathering techniques that portray a multifaceted human society. In ethnographic studies, the researcher witnesses an ongoing educational event in order to record what occurs. The ethnographic researcher believes that reality is a social construction that individuals ascribe meaning to, and individuals form constructions out of this reality (McMillan and Schumacher 1997:427). In Lincoln and Guba

(1985:332), data is maintained as the constructions that are offered, and the analysis of this data leads to its reconstruction.

*methods of data collection*

The research instruments used in reconstructing this ethnographic enquiry were observations and interviews. Allen (1990:621,818) contends that observations are accurate watching and noting of phenomena as they occur in nature with regard to cause and effect, and interviews are used to discover the opinions and experiences of persons. In this study, interviews were semi-structured in nature to allow the subjects to express themselves as comprehensively as possible on the experiences of ESL teaching and learning in Grade eight.

#### 4.2.1 Social context

The geographical delimitation is Thabong in the Lejweleputswa District, Free State Province in South Africa. Following the procedure of ethnographic research, the rules pertaining to rights around individual and group information were respected. The researcher kept the research procedure with the intent of following the legislation on educational research studies (Wiersma 2000:422). The researcher obtained approval from the Free State Education Department to do a research study on the communicative approach for effective English Second Language teaching and learning in Grade eight, in five of the previously disadvantaged schools in Thabong township, the Lejweleputswa District.

*tape recorder*

#### 4.2.2 Sampling methods

Population

In this study, the target population is all the previously disadvantaged schools in the afore-mentioned district. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:168) postulate that in educational research, subjects who happen to be accessible and who happen to represent certain characteristics become selected and are used.

Virginia CC

The previously disadvantaged schools were selected for observations according to a quota sampling method. In quota sampling the target population becomes selected according to “quotas”. The establishment of quotas makes the sample to represent the target population according to diverse, and identifiable characteristics (Sowell 2001:45). The selection of schools was characterized by language of instruction, gender, race, grade level and geographical location. The strength of quota sampling lies with the fact that the sampling is less costly and timesaving. The generalization of information is possible to similar subjects (McMillan and Schumacher 1997:171).

The ten Grade eight ESL learners and two Grade eight ESL educators from each school were selected as subjects for interviews by means of systematic sampling. The researcher randomly selected the first members of the sample from the class lists. The male and female names on the class lists were arranged alphabetically and separately to allow for gender equity. The rest of the subjects (learners only) were then selected at intervals of five from the class lists to allow the possibility of being included in the sample (Sowell



2001:45; McMillan and Schumacher 1997:166). The research sample for the interviews in this study therefore consists of fifty Grade eight ESL learners and ten Grade eight ESL educators.

#### **4.2.3 Research instruments**

According to Allen (1990:614), an instrument is a tool that is implemented in a scientific work such as in research studies. In this study, the instruments that were used for data-collection were observations and interviews. The collection of data was done early October 2001. The time for the collection of data was planned and executed during this period, so as to allow the subjects ample time to reflect on their learned Grade eight ESL experiences that took place during the year.

The Grade eight classrooms (where this study is directed) give a true reflection on the ESL teaching and learning experiences by means of observations.

##### **4.2.3.1 Structure of observations**

In Mason's (1996:61) perspective, observations of reality in a natural setting give evidence to the actual phenomena as it takes place. The rationale for observations was to obtain first-hand information regarding the teaching and learning strategies employed by the educators in the Grade eight ESL classes.

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Wiersma (2000:248) strives for the realm on the notion that observations in ethnographic research are comprehensive. That is, the observer continuously attempts to observe all relevant incidences in an unobtrusive way. The researcher captures the perspective of each individual being observed. Observations done in this manner, allow the researcher to pick up all subtle cues and nuances.

In this study, the researcher was interested to observe the manner in which the Grade eight educators facilitate the teaching and learning of ESL. However, meaningful teaching and learning also depends on the involvement of the learners. Learners are social beings, and need to be actively involved in their learning as a society in order to make teaching and learning meaningful. Learners interact by means of using certain communicative skills inside and outside classes.

Hence, the semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher as a tool that would validate the learners' communicative skills in ESL.

#### **4.2.3.2 Structure of interviews**

The interview sessions succeeded the observation periods in order to allow the researcher to question certain actions that were noted during observations. A more in-depth answer can be obtained this way. Patton (1990:20) claims that with interviews there are maximum interaction and exchange of ideas from the subjects because the researcher explores the responses. The interviews give the subjects a chance to express their

innermost feelings from a particular perspective regarding the topic under discussion.

The semi-structured (open-ended) questions were used during the interview sessions to allow subjects additional variability in their answers. The subjects were allowed to think about and solve a problem before attempting to communicate an answer. This type of interview allows the researcher the freedom to probe further into responses if deemed necessary. Responses to interview questions were recorded by means of a tape-recorder, after seeking consent from the interviewees. In this way, the data-recording procedure used in the interview does not interfere with the process of conducting the interviews (Wiersma 2000:187).

All data that would be collected was limited to the use of observations and interviews as instruments.

### **4.3 LIMITATION**

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:600) assert that the limitation of the design depends on the selection of the sources and the problem statement. If limitation is explicit, the researcher cites those aspects that can be identified according to the scope of the study, the design and the methodology.

Wiersma (2000:247,248) further confirms that data-collection can be limited to relevant instruments such as observations and interviews. In ethnographic research, interviews may be conducted with key individuals, and data may



be collected through a survey that may support or refute information, collected through observations. Wolcott (1988:194) affirms to the use of observations in the sense that, observation styles are differentiated according to needs such as limited observations. The role of the limited observer would then be when opportunities for observations are restricted and other data-collection techniques, of necessity, take precedence (Wiersma 2000:247).

The reporting of this study is analysed according to the original design (Simons and Usher 2000:153), that is, the method of data-collection done is through the use of observations and interviews.

#### **4.4 BASIC DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

The researcher will first discuss the observations made:

##### **4.4.1 Observations from Grade eight ESL classes**

*Observations revealed the following concerning the educators' method of facilitating ESL:*

At the beginning and throughout the lesson presentations, most of the ESL educators have shown little knowledge of OBE principles, and some had no adequate training in English as a subject. Most of the ESL educators have mainly used the traditional way of teaching, that is the telling method.

During observations most of the educators informed learners what to expect in connection with the lessons that were to be taught. Most of the learners automatically followed the instructions they were informed about. According to the researcher, such a trend may let the educators to believe that all learners understand what was taught in the lesson. Learners have responded positively to most of the questions that were asked by the educators. In the majority of instances, learners responded by raising their hands in order to indicate that they know the answers. Learners who did not raise their hands were neither given a chance to try to respond nor to ask for clarity on questions asked.

The learners were mostly told what to do, for instance when the learners had to perform certain writing tasks, the educators gave clues to learners on how to make responses to questions at hand.

Educators seemed to have preferred the use of the telling method as a teaching strategy in the lessons (cf. 2.5.3). This may be as a result of limited space in the classroom to employ a method such as group-work. The only space that allowed free movement was in front of the chalkboard.

The large learner to educator ratio seemed to have contributed negatively in effecting ESL teaching and learning in most of the schools that were observed. During the course of facilitation, most of the educators stood aloof from their learners and preferably stood next to the chalkboard. In most instances the lack of space to allow free movement created a major problems for proper interaction between educator and learners and between learners themselves.

### *The use of the learning support material (LSM):*

Some of the educators consulted their textbooks on a regular basis in order to ease the facilitation of the lessons. Although these educators did not stare lengthily into their textbooks, it seemed that they did not have the confidence to desert the textbook at all. Most of the educators did not use any other teaching support material. It did seem to the researcher though, that most of these educators have experience in ESL teaching and learning.

The researcher also observed that in most of the ESL classes the textbooks were limited in supply. The learners had to share textbooks – sometimes up to four learners per textbook. The only books that all the learners possessed, were the writing books for class-work and tests.

Learners were given little opportunity to write on the chalkboard, which is understandable given the class sizes. The chalkboard was mainly used as a support material to explain some of the aspects of the lessons. Most of the educators were continuously elaborating, with minimal movement away from the chalkboard (cf. 2.5.1).

Most of the ESL educators seemed to have overlooked the important issue of learner involvement. Effective questioning in order to ascertain the level of understanding by learners was minimal (cf. 2.5.3).

In most of the schools, electrical connections were installed. However, no electrical support material was ever used by these educators. In almost all of the lessons observed, the only support materials that were used, were



textbooks and the chalkboard. Most of the classrooms were not displayed with LSM for the particular lessons.

It seemed to the researcher that educators do not want to buy or even create their own LSM. They most probably expect the Department of Education to supply them with all the material (cf. 3.7.2).

### *Assessment and reinforcement of the performed tasks:*

The majority of the performed tasks were on copying questions and writing answers either from the textbooks or the chalkboard.

Most of the learners rarely discussed issues or asked questions or helped other group members with explanations. Learners have spent most of the time doing the written work individually, either from a textbook or the chalkboard.

In some instances the time frames allocated to execute given tasks were limited. Most of the educators seemed inclined to treat as much content as possible in a given time frame as to ensure that all the content is covered.

A concern for the researcher was that little time was allocated for corrections to be made on performed tasks in many instances. This may have a huge impact on the assessment scores that these ESL learners will obtain (cf. 2.4.2). Most of the time homework involved only writing tasks. Learners had to copy the work directly from the textbooks.

In many instances homework succeeded incomplete corrected and sometimes uncorrected written class-work (tasks). Learners were also not given homework regularly after each task (cf. 2.4.3).

The tasks that are corrected incompletely can result as a problem to most of learners. Working from the known to the unknown becomes impossible, as content that is assumed to be known, is not. Learners may experience problems in attempting any new tasks.

Assessment was mostly done towards the end of the lessons. The learners were asked to read questions from the chalkboard or their class-work books in order to allow them to respond. Learners who appeared to know the answers indicated it as such by raising their hands. Most of the learners who responded to the questions had difficulty in expressing themselves in English. The construction of proper sentences seemed to be the major problem (cf. 2.3). It also happened that some learners raised their hands only to keep quiet when they were asked to answer.

Learners were able to use BICS, because they were fluent in reading questions from the chalkboard and textbooks. What seemed to be a problem was the learners' CALP. The moment learners had to apply some knowledge or construct their own sentences in certain tasks given, they seemed at a loss for words. This indicates clearly that learners need reinforcement to negotiate meaning. The researcher is of the opinion that effective communication can only be enhanced when both the educator and the learner are proactively involved in a co-operative learning environment (cf. 2.4.1).

No activities such as dialogues, debates, discussion or drama and singing were observed. These are the type of activities that can actively involve the learners in a co-operative learning environment.

#### **4.4.2 Interview responses**

The responses of both the ESL educators and learners now follow. The researcher will first report on the responses made by the ESL educators.

##### **4.4.2.1 Educators' responses during interviews**

The researcher opted to have the questions as part of the reporting stage and not as an appendix, as it makes referencing to the questions easier.

##### **Question 1: Do you think that learners in your ESL class experience problems with English as a second language in general?**

Most of the educators said that learners seem to understand English and are able to converse in it. They were of the opinion that the major problem that the learners encountered was to express themselves properly in English in a formal learning environment like the classroom. The ESL tasks that involved creative writing and creative thinking were a course of concern, as most learners seem to struggle with that aspect of the language.



It is the opinion of the researcher that these responses relate to the BICS and CALP level of English proficiency. Learners sometimes seem to be able to speak English in general conversations, but when the deeper cognitive levels of English are needed to complete certain academic tasks, they experience problems (cf. 2.3).

Most *responses* were in the line of:

*"Most learners do experience problems with ESL. They normally cannot say their sentences properly. They struggle to say what they are thinking. They want to speak English, but find it difficult".*

**Question 2: Which methods/strategies and LSM do you use when teaching ESL? Explain.**

Most of the educators responded by giving preference to the use of the textbook and telling methods. They said that all the content is explained in the textbooks and therefore they cannot make mistakes. They feel that they should tell the learners about the content, because the learners need to get all the information.

A small number of the educators said that the introductory part of their lessons normally begin with reading and speaking activities. Learners did reading exercises from their class-work books, textbooks and narrate what they have been reading. Comprehensive dialogue regarding the content, therefore did not take place.

It seemed that some of the educators preferred to start their lessons with reading or some speaking “ice breakers”. These educators say they teach in this way in order to discover the prior knowledge of learners before dwelling into the actual lesson (cf. 2.5.1 and 2.5.2).

Most of the educators said that there were no specific teaching strategies that they follow, because when learners read, they get a change to pronounce the words.

Some *responses* were:

*“Yes, I prefer the use of a textbook. It is easy to use in order to involve most of the learners. Most of the learners follow the flow of the lesson easily when the textbooks direct the tasks”.*

*“I trust the use of the telling method in order to keep the learners on track”.*

*“Language depends on how you use it and for what purpose is it used. It is not a subject where a specific structure is followed. In reading tasks, each learner gets a chance of making verbal pronunciations of words”.*

**Question 3: Do you think that your current teaching methods are successful? Elaborate.**

Most of the educators were of the opinion that as long as the learners can understand the questions in the textbook or on the chalkboard, they are fine. These educators think that their ESL teaching methods are adequate. Some educators said that they wish they could find out more about strategies to

help their learners more. These educators say that their learners struggle with putting words into context when making sentences. That is, internalizing words and making meaning out of words (cf. 2.4.1.).

Most of the educators seemed to be used to the methods that they use and do not feel that they should alter anything. It is the opinion of the researcher that little time seemed to have been given to learners to express their ideas. That may be a reason why learners become unable to think and reason on their own, without consulting textbooks and the chalkboard.

*Responses were:*

*"Learners are induced to listening rather than doing the tasks themselves. They rely on my narrations and instructions on how to carry out tasks more than making interpretations out of what they have to do".*

*"Teaching reading is interesting. When learners have to read out of the textbooks and chalkboard, it becomes easy for me to check mistakes and pronunciation. The learners read individually or in groups. In instances where pronunciation of words becomes bad, I delay reading for a while and clarify the meaning of that specific word".*

*"I want to learn more about the new strategies, that will help my learners."*



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#### Question 4: How would you describe the learner involvement in your ESL lessons?

Most of the educators said that in certain tasks the learners copied tasks from hand-outs. Exercises in the forms of class-work and homework were done from these hand-outs.

Some of the ESL educators said that they preferred to involve the learners through the use of task-based activities such as writing comprehension, doing dialogues and a bit of debating. In comprehension for example, the learners' understanding of meaning is assessed. Learners internalize words so that they can derive meaning out of what they say. This did not happen often though, because of time constraints.

It seemed to the researcher that intra-communication was practiced more than inter-communication in most of the ESL classrooms (**cf. 2.1**). Learners are not actively involved in the lessons on a continuous basis.

Some *responses* from interviewees:

*"I sometimes use dialogues and debates to treat tenses. Activities which advance the learners' use of words enforce individual creativity of sentences".*

*"I prefer to give learners writing tasks as part of enhancing creative skills. Learners also practice composition and letter writing".*

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**Question 5: In what ways do you provide learners with opportunities to apply new knowledge?**

Most of the educators said that learners did written tasks, following specific instructions given to them. Sometimes learners made responses to questions asked on the chalkboard. These educators seemed to believe that these opportunities are enough for their learners.

Some educators said that they let their learners speak the new words or tenses they have learned. In that way learners apply the new knowledge. The researcher was not convinced that these opportunities are enough to facilitate ESL properly.

Most educators were inclined to tell learners what to do rather than showing learners skills on how to apply new tasks. Learners are given tasks with specific instructions, and therefore are not allowed to provide their own thoughts, ideas and initiatives. Learners need to be given time to apply their knowledge in order to prove their understanding (cf. 3.5.3).

*Responses:*

*"Learners are to complete the sentences with appropriate words".*

*"I usually ask the learners to read and answer questions based on the previous reading".*

*"I let my learners speak the new words or tenses, then they practice it".*

**Question 6: How often do you use English outside the class with both learners and educators? Elaborate.**

Most of the ESL educators said that they rarely use English outside the class. They do not see the necessity to speak English inside and outside the classroom. Learners are used to speak to the educators in their mother tongue outside the classroom. One of these educators said that learners feel more comfortable in using their mother tongue in conversations with educators outside the classroom.

One of the educators said that English is sometimes spoken with learners outside the classroom, but in such cases the conversation deals with a topic that was raised in the classroom.

Some of the ESL educators said that during conversations outside the classes, learners had problems with “the self” when speaking English. The learners did not feel confident enough to speak English outside the classroom. These educators said that the communities in the townships were not well conversed with the use of English, and therefore they are used to speak to members of their community in the mother tongue.

From the responses it is clear that English is rarely spoken outside the ESL classroom. The researcher feels that this may contribute to the lack of confidence in ESL learners to meaningfully participate in ESL classes.



Some responses:

*"I usually interact into English conversations when treating language aspects originating in class. It is in rare instances such as during informal talking that I exchange words using English outside classes".*

*"When the learners question using English, I reply in the same language".*

**Question 7: Is there something that you think can be done in order to make the teaching and learning of ESL more effective?**

The educators were aware of how they approached ESL teaching and learning. Most of the educators have said that they have taught in the traditional way of using textbooks and the telling method since they started teaching.

Some of the educators have said that they prefer strategies where learners were taught in groups as a method that would allow learners the opportunity to talk. The problem that these educators have encountered was that they have no thorough understanding of the strategies on how to accomplish and maintain proper group-work.

Most of the educators seemed to be worried about the lack of learning support material. However, these educators preferred the use of textbooks instead of using learning support material, such as charts and transparencies.

Some of these ESL educators said that they were struggling with materials when they had to integrate the knowledge that they presented to learners.

They prefer to use ready-made materials such as textbooks rather than improvising their time in making their own teaching and learning materials, as this is time consuming and may be expensive.

Some of the educators said that the funds that the Department of Education provided for learning materials were not sufficient. That is why they were unable to buy charts and transparencies to enhance their lessons. One of these educators mentioned that a requisition was made to obtain charts, but nothing came from it. These educators seemed a bit afraid to make these comments, as if they were scared to criticize the Department of Education.

Some of the ESL educators preferred the use of dictionaries. ESL educators said that learners were instructed to look for difficult words in the dictionaries. These educators seemed to have the idea that dictionaries should be bought by the Department of Education for every learner in order to enhance the understanding of English concepts.

It seemed that learning support material were a common factor that educators regard as possibly helpful in their ESL lessons.

Another problem that was mentioned by a small number of educators is that they often have electricity failures. The electrical equipment they can use in the classroom will then be rendered useless. The researcher was not convinced that this problem should refrain them from using electrical equipment.

Responses were in the line of:

*"I taught the way I do from the beginning. I am not sure whether there is a better way."*

*"I want to use group work, but I am not sure what they should do there."*

*"Learning support material makes teaching and learning meaningful. At the moment I use textbooks and dictionaries in order to bring a change in English teaching".*

*"We need to be provided with enough textbooks for every learner".*

*"There are number of days where I had to make requisition at the principal's office to buy charts".*

*"We have a lot of power failures in the township, so I do not use the electrical equipment".*

**Question 8: Do you think it is important that English educators receive special OBE training on ESL strategies?**

Most of the ESL educators envisaged that the teaching and learning of ESL would be a success only when all ESL educators can receive thorough in-service training regarding OBE principles. These educators expressed the wish that OBE training be delivered on a continuous basis to allow them to



stay abreast of any changes regarding alternative approaches to teaching and learning.

All the ESL educators felt that the OBE method of teaching will be good and would bring about satisfactory results in ESL. The problem with some of educators is that they have not received advanced OBE training on how to elevate the level of ESL teaching and learning with relevant strategies, and they subsequently reverted back to the methods they know best.

Some of the educators have lamented on the manner in which the learning facilitators have guided the OBE workshops they attended in the past. The information that the learning facilitators provided at these workshops was not disseminated in a way that would make it comprehensible for educators. The ESL educators said that it seemed as if the learning facilitators were not passionate and had some uncertainty around OBE and its principles themselves.

Some *responses* were:

*“Yes, it is vital that ESL educators receive special OBE training as more learners experience difficulties in placing their expressions into context and I want to help them”.*

*“Formal English usage is different from casual talking, it needs an individual to adhere to certain language principles. So, it is necessary that educators receive training in OBE”.*

Some educators said the following:

*“The forty-hours workshop of OBE was not sufficient for a thorough training in new skills”.*

*“The problem is worsened by the learning facilitators who are not clear and certain on their stands in promoting OBE”.*

#### **4.4.2.2      Learners’ responses during the interviews**

Learners had the following *responses* during the interview sessions:

**Question 1: You take English as a second language. Do you find English easy or difficult to learn? Explain.**

Most of the learners said that English is easy to learn hence it encourages unity among the nations, and learners socialize with other learners from other language groups. English has been a means to interact informally with other learners (**cf. 1.2**). These responses gave the advantages of using English as a language.

It seems that most of the learners enjoyed the liberty of using English during informal conversations, such as the interviews conducted with them. The learners found it easy to answer the questions, as they were not academically demanding.

Some learners admitted that English is not that easy as a subject. They sometimes struggle in the ESL classroom.

Some *responses*:

*"Mm ... it is easy to learn because ... what we learn inside the class is talked by other people outside the school".*

*"English become easy to understand because most of the people use it everywhere where people hold meetings, conferences, and so on".*

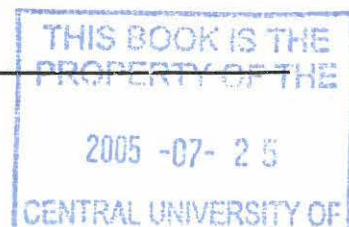
*"It is not that easy in the class, then it is sometimes difficult."*

## **Question 2: How do you prepare and learn for ESL classes?**

Only a few of the learners answered the question as it was asked. Some of the learners said that they prepared for ESL classes by reading some textbooks at home and sometimes in class when they were free.

The majority of the learners said that the educators instructed them to answer questions that were written in the textbook and chalkboard. The learners said that they answered questions individually when they were asked to do so by the educator.

Some of the learners said that the educator reads directly from the textbook and then they learn that way. The researcher finds this method very disturbing.





Some of the learners also said that the educators sometimes give reading opportunities out of the prescribed books. These learners said that the educators instructed them to read either loud or in silence.

Most of the learners seemed to be happy with the ways in which their ESL educators presented the listening tasks. The enjoyment was brought by the fact that learners only listened while educators talked. The listening tasks were not reinforced through other tasks such as role-playing or debating the given listening tasks. The educators seemed to be satisfied with the use of the story telling method, because through listening, the learners do not ask questions. The educators produced the knowledge for the learners and do not let the learners construct knowledge themselves (cf. 2.2.2).

The majority of the learners had no unique style of learning. The learners prepared and learned English when in class during the lesson presentations.

Some of the *responses* were:

*"I usually read notes at home because ... I always look at my time-table the previous day when English is coming".*

*"I wait for the teacher to ask me questions and ... and then I answer the questions".*

*"I write the notes which the teacher have given us, and ... teach them myself".*

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*"I like to prepare to read when I am in the class. At home is not easy to read because ... it is noisy".*

**Question 3: Are there any group activities in your ESL classroom, or do you work on your own? Explain.**

Most of the learners said that they very rarely work in groups. They said that they can not move their tables in the classroom to look at each other.

Some learners said that they sometimes work in groups. These learners are of the opinion that they can learn much more by doing group work. They also mentioned that they use their mother tongue mostly in their groups.

*Responses were in the line of:*

*"We do not work in groups, we cannot move all the tables to see each other."*

*"My group member sometimes help me by giving explanations on the question that I don't understand. I think I can learn more like this."*

*"My group member explain in English. When I don't understand, I ask him again. He tell me with another language . He tell me in Sesotho".*

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**Question 4: Which English activities do you enjoy most? Elaborate.**

Most of the learners seemed to enjoy the reading experiences in class the most. With probing the researcher ascertained that they do not like reading aloud, because of fear of making mistakes. They prefer to read by themselves. Some learners said that they enjoy debating in the ESL classroom, but mentioned that this do not happen very often.

*Responses were:*

*"I like reading alone from the textbooks".*

*"I like debating, but we only do it a few times."*

**Question 5: How often do you communicate in English in your ESL classroom? Explain.**

The majority of the learners said that they use English when they answer questions or talked to the educator in the classroom. Many of these learners also mentioned that mother tongue was used when engaging in group work. They felt that they can explain the concepts to their fellow learners better by using their mother tongue.

Some of the learners said that they use English all the time, because they want to get as much practice in English as possible. They do not like it when their classmates resort to mother tongue.



Responses were:

*"I use English when I talk with the classmates when we sit in groups. But when my other classmates have problem with words, I explain in mother tongue".*

*"I want to use English all the time. I do not talk in my mother tongue in the English class."*

**Question 6: What kinds of tasks are given to you by the ESL educator?  
Explain.**

Almost all of the learners said that they made summaries of the tasks that were presented in class. Most of the learners said that they re-write some paragraphs out of the textbooks or do some examples from the textbook when they learn grammar.

It became evident to the researcher from the responses that learners mostly do a number of exercises on grammar or copy the summary of the educator from the chalkboard. They also have to write a few compositions or letters. After probing it surfaced that the learners disliked the writing tasks (such as compositions and letters), because they find it difficult to write English correctly.

The reading tasks seemed to be a major interesting portion of learning for the majority of the learners. They find it interesting to read, but prefer silent reading.

Some *responses* from learners:

*"We like to write summaries from textbooks very much, ... and we write composition and letters, sometimes".*

*"I do not like to write the compositions, I think I make too many mistakes."*

*" I like it when we can read, but I do not want to read loud... then no-one can hear if I make a mistake."*

**Question 7: What interests you most in English learning? Explain.**

It was evident from the responses that reading is most favoured by learners. Many of these learners also mentioned that they want to read like their ESL educator. It is the opinion of the researcher that imitating other people is a good language practice, because learners start using the language in a practical way (cf. 2.4.1).

Many of the learners also mentioned that reading tasks did not only take place inside the classroom. Some of the learners have said that they have also enjoyed reading at home when they were with the family members. During the home game-plays, some of the learners said that they have enjoyed to role-play as school educators.

It is significant that no mention was made by learners of debates, discussions and other activities that should form part of ESL teaching and learning.

*"I like to copy the reading style of my teacher, that is why I like to read in the class. I also read for my younger brother at home".*

*"I enjoy looking at the way my teacher reads everyday. At home, I read a lot for my cousin and my smaller sisters. Sometimes ... I ... I become a teacher of my sisters when we play".*

**Question 8: How does your ESL educator present daily lessons?  
Explain.**

Most of the learners said that their ESL educators began their lessons with questions. Their educators posed questions, and the learners gave answers.

Some of the learners said that their educators liked to create scenes when introducing new lessons. After probing, the researcher found out that these educators tried to make the lesson interesting by starting with a story, or linking the content to their life world.

In most cases though, the ESL educators provided limited opportunities for learners to be actively involved by means of dialogues, debates, or any conversational tasks at the beginning of the lessons.

Some of the learners have said that their ESL educators gave them class notes/hand-outs so that they could read at home. A few of the learners have said that their ESL educators first explained the activities and gave them some class-work afterwards.



Responses were:

*"When my teacher teach, ... my educator start to tell us the topic he is going to teach today, then he asks questions and then start after we gave him the answers."*

*"My teacher tells the story and then the lesson will be on that story."*

*"My English teacher first let us do debate, dialogues or hold a discussion. Sometimes he asks us questions after listening from the tape-recorder."*

**Question 9: Apart from your ESL class, how do you involve yourself in English communication?**

Most of the learners said that they hear a lot of English on the television. These learners also read English magazines and in some instances comic books. Most of the learners said that they rarely speak English with their friends, but that they use English when addressing people in shops.

The researcher is of the opinion that the learners (the encoders) will use English for communication, but need other people who can act as receivers (decoders) of information. Effective communication in ESL is a two-way process that needs pro-active and re-active participation (cf. 2.4).

*"I watch English on the television. I like to read some English books".*

*"We usually meet each other in shopping malls, taxis or movies in town. This is where I also use English with the people in the shops".*

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

Each school provided ten ESL learners and two ESL educators. The researcher managed to collect data through observations and interviews from five schools. The findings from the observations and interviews confirm that the Grade eight ESL learners experience problems with English due to insufficient use of advanced strategies for teaching and learning.

The ESL educators are certain that education has transformed and OBE has maintained a change in the South African schools. However, the educators are still using the traditional way of teaching. The ESL educators use either one or two teaching methods, continuously applied throughout every lesson. The problem is brought forward by the fact that educators do not have a thorough knowledge of relevant teaching strategies for teaching ESL, especially when working with large groups of learners.

Both the ESL educators and learners are not actively involved in the use of English outside the ESL classroom. Learners seem to be more fluent in informal English communication than during formal cognitive English communication. From the observations and interviews, it is clear that ESL educators should be exposed to more advanced teaching and learning strategies, such as the communicative approach, to ensure effective ESL acquisition.

Chapter five gives recommendations on how findings of ESL teaching and learning can be enhanced so that there be a better communication in English.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study and also indicates some recommendations regarding findings on the communicative approach in ESL teaching and learning. The conclusions devote the discussion around the literature study done in Chapters two and three. Chapter four outlines the research design and collection of data, reports and analyses the study. Data collection was done by means of observations and semi-structured interviews.

#### 5.2 FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

The findings are discussed in three-fold. Findings on the literature study will be discussed first, and the findings on the observations and interviews will then follow.

5.2.1 Findings from the **literature study** are now discussed:

5.2.1.1 Meaningful communication in ESL does not only happen to the educator who encodes inputs, but most importantly to the learners who decode the outputs. Meaningful interaction

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enhances communication between the educator and learners (**cf. 2.1**).

- 5.2.1.2 After the democratic elections in 1994, the South African system of education was restructured. The Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach came into use and was introduced for Grade eight in 2001 (**cf. 2.2**).
- 5.2.1.3 English is used as a language of learning by the previously disadvantaged schools. Teaching and learning in all Learning Areas is facilitated through English (**cf. 2.2**).
- 5.2.1.4 The Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) are the major indicators that assure learners' proficiency in English for conversations. Learners seem to be fluent with BICS for informal conversations and struggle with the use of CALP during formal conversations (**cf. 2.3**).
- 5.2.1.5 The best way to enhance the level of ESL is to integrate the communicative approach with the relevant teaching and learning strategies (**cf. 2.4.1**).
- 5.2.1.6 Effective ESL communication in teaching and learning shift from an educator to a learner-centred approach (**cf. 2.4**). Co-operative learning for a meaningful communication becomes created (**cf. 2.4.1**).

- 5.2.1.7 Cognition depends on how the cortex of the learner becomes prolonged by the educator, forcing thinking skills into the learners' thoughts (cf. 2.4.2).
- 5.2.1.8 Competent learners are developed through a meaningful learning process. Motivation, scaffolding and mediation expose the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (cf. 2.4.3).
- 5.2.1.9 Passive learners are unable to involve themselves in making responses to questions in class. The learners are reactive, show resistance and do not develop the given inputs in becoming outputs (cf. 2.4.2). Group-work enhances the development of outputs (responses) by making learners to interact with one another. The educator reinforces learning by means of activities such as debating, discussions and drama (cf. 2.4.4).
- 5.2.1.10 The interpersonal, intrapersonal and intragroup communications enhance the acquisition of social skills (cf. 2.4.5).
- 5.2.1.11 Teaching and learning is drawn back by means of the inductive, deductive and suggestopedia in developing the four language skills, that is reading, listening, writing and speaking (cf. 2.5).
- 5.2.1.12 OBE culminates Curriculum 2005 through the achievement of the Critical and Specific Outcomes in teaching so that meaningful learning could take place (cf. 3.3 and 3.5).



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- 5.2.1.13 The communicative approach has individual and group strategies that can help in achieving ESL outcomes (cf. 3.5.5).
- 5.2.1.14 Strategies such as indirect, direct, independent, co-operative, reception and discovery learning enhance ESL teaching and learning (cf. 3.6).
- 5.2.1.15 Learning support material forms an integral part of all lessons; it serves a purpose in the learners' lives by enhancing teaching and learning with the required values; is content-based and is to be chosen to achieve the Specific Outcomes (cf. 3.7).
- 5.2.2 Findings from **observations**:
- 5.2.2.1 The educators do not have a clear knowledge of OBE principles in order to advance ESL teaching and learning. Most of the educators resort to the traditional way of teaching (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.2 The textbook and telling methods are the traditional ways of teaching and learning that are still in use by most of ESL educators (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.3 The large learner to educator ratio has a negative contribution towards ESL teaching and learning. The educators are unable to maintain learner-centred teaching (cf. 4.4.1).

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- 5.2.2.4 The manner in which the educators facilitate ESL is static because there is little interaction amongst learners, and rare interaction of educators with learners (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.5 The classroom with no learning support material impact ESL negatively as educators expect the Department of Education to provide the schools with LSM (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.6 The ESL educators rely mostly on textbooks as a resource. There is a need to use different types of resource materials for every single lesson (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.7 The performed tasks in classes are not task-based and do not instill knowledge because learners copy what is already available from the textbooks and handouts (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.8 The learners struggle with the manipulation of English terms when constructing meaningful sentences due to BICS and CALP (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.9 The educators do not allow learners enough time to give feedback (cf. 4.4.1).
- 5.2.2.10 All tasks given to learners should be on the cognitive level of the learners (cf. 4.4.1).

- 5.2.2.11 Self-activity such as debates and discussions enhance a co-operative learning environment (**cf. 4.4.1**).
- 5.2.3 The **interviews with ESL educators** lead the researcher to draw the following conclusions:
  - 5.2.3.1 The use of relevant strategies in assisting learners to communicate in English for formal purposes is a problem for the Grade eight ESL educators (**cf. 4.4.2.1**).
  - 5.2.3.2 The Grade eight ESL educators spend more time telling the learners the basic information about the lessons (**cf. 4.4.2.1**).
  - 5.2.3.3 Learning support material creates problems for educators. The Grade eight educators do not seem to have the skills of improvising and creating their own useful resources (**cf. 4.4.2.1**).
  - 5.2.3.4 The OBE facilitation poses a problem for the ESL educators especially during the in-service training (**cf. 4.4.2.1**).
- 5.2.4 The **interviews with ESL learners** lead the researcher to draw the following conclusions:
  - 5.2.4.1 ESL learners enjoy English mostly during the informal conversations (**cf. 4.4.2.2**).



- 5.2.4.2 When a language problem arises in the classroom, the Grade eight ESL learners resort to the use of mother tongue (cf. 4.4.2.2).
- 5.2.4.3 The ESL activities for learners such as textbook usage or silent reading enhance intrapersonal communication (cf. 4.4.2.2).
- 5.2.4.4 Learners enjoy imitating their ESL educators. In role-playing some conversational scenes, learners explore the use of English authentically as in real scenarios (cf. 4.4.2.2).
- 5.2.4.5 ESL learners are engaged too much with encoding inputs rather than decoding outputs (cf. 4.4.2.2).

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are discussed against the background of information obtained from the literature study and the data collected through observations and interviews.

- 5.3.1 Pertinent to the efficient use of English, it is important that all ESL teaching and learning be directed towards relevant strategies. Every lesson should integrate a variety of communicative strategies.

- 5.3.2 Some of the ESL educators are not properly qualified. However, some are in the process of advancing their teaching qualifications. The present and future ESL educators in the Senior Phase should have English as a major course of study.
- 5.3.3 ESL educators should continuously update themselves with modern teaching strategies. Assessed courses, workshops and in-service training should be arranged by the Department of Education.
- 5.3.4 Educators in all Learning Areas remain language educators. Each and every educator should stress the use of English in all activities that are carried out by the learners for every Learning Area.
- 5.3.5 Co-operative learning environment such as group work should be emphasized in most of the activities. The communicative skills emerge when learners become actively involved in real and authentic situations.
- 5.3.6 More time for active learning should be given to learners. Learners have to respond by proactively showing outputs. OBE embarks on the learner-centred approach.
- 5.3.7 Educators need to use the Critical and Specific outcomes as guides in developing the learning support material.

- 5.3.8 ESL learners should be enriched with skills on how to use English for variety of purposes and not be taught what English is with no significance of using it.
- 5.3.9 Effective ESL teaching and learning needs open and verbal communication mostly by the learners themselves. The individual learners need to create words by themselves (outputs) and put into proof the use of these words.

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The research study on ESL teaching and learning for the Grade eight classes has shown that there are dysfunctions, deficiencies, ineffectiveness and inappropriateness with regard to teaching and learning strategies in the classrooms.

The previously disadvantaged black schools are multilingual. English is a second language to all learners and is also the language of learning. Communication through the use of English is a problem to most of the learners. The reason is that learners do not converse regularly in English (inside and outside the classroom). Learners communicate in English in formal teaching especially in front of the educators. During informal conversations, learners avoid English for personal reasons, and resort to mother tongue. An interesting aspect when learners avoid English during conversation is that they lack English vocabulary. Learners do not have adequate skills that could make them remember the acquired knowledge.



Learners perform fairly in written activities, and only show deficiencies in activities that involve role-play such as dialogues and discussions. Some of the educators turn to avoid role-play for the sake of covering the learning programmes. To some of the educators, teaching strategies are a problem.

Lack of initiative by ESL educators in using modern teaching strategies leads to underachievement of learners. However, the communicative approach answers problems for ESL Senior Phase, Grade eight classes in the previously disadvantaged black schools. The communicative approach has strategies that educators can use in maintaining ESL at a very high standard.

## **5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The following aspects require some scientific studies:

- Research on the interdependence of English Second Language and English First Language skills.
- The role of the ESL educator in the Intermediate Phase, regarding the acquisition of ESL.
- The possibility of forcing thinking in the learners' cortex by using Arts and Culture objects to enhance verbal communication in English.

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